Tested Methods for Teachers of Juniors

MABEL CREWS RINGLAND

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By
MABEL CREWS RINGLAND

Introduction by
REV. FRANK LANGFORD
Secretary, Sunday Schools and Young People's Societies of the Methodist Church in Canada

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INTRODUCTION

By

Rev. Frank Langford, Secretary, Sunday Schools and Young People's Societies of the Methodist Church in Canada

THERE is no greater need in the sphere of Religious Education than that of keeping our whole work close to the ordinary, everyday lives of boys and girls, men and women. We must never lose sight of the human element in Christian work. In the flood of literature on Religious Education that has been poured forth during these past few years, very many books have been emphasizing the technical or academic side, and laying stress on theory in such a way as to seem far removed from the conditions that have to be met by the actual Sunday School teacher with her group of pupils.

It is a great pleasure, therefore, for me to write a few lines of introduction to this book, which, while it has a background of thorough technical and academic knowledge, yet is so delightfully conversational and practical. The theoretical side of the book is kept well out of sight, and the common-sense, practical presentation of problems that have to be met every time the teacher and class come together, is uppermost.

The chapters of the book are intimate and chatty, and it seems like a friendly visit with some one who is facing the same sort of problems and enjoying the experience of meeting them just as we ourselves have done on many occasions. It will be a real tonic to the multitude of teachers and workers in Sunday Schools and the home.

Those who read the book are likely to find in the process not only the real satisfaction to which I have already referred, but, almost without realizing it, they are going to acquire also a vast fund of thoroughly sound educational theory, for the author's knowledge of life and of the principles of teaching shine through these practical chapters on every page. This is not a text-book, as the author herself says, but it will do a great many things that text-books do and a great many things that ordinary text-books are almost sure *not* to do.

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

THIS little volume makes no pretense of being a text-book for Junior workers, as splendid books of the sort are to be had. Rather, its mission is to discuss with teachers the various problems and aspects of their work with boys and girls between the ages of nine and twelve, in the hope that from these practical experiences of a fellow-teacher, they may gain some inspiration and help in their very vital task of leading the Junior to become a "Doer of the Word," and of bringing him into conscious relationship with Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour.

M. R.

Islington, Ont.

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I

THE OPPORTUNITY OF THE JUNIOR TEACHER

SOME one has said that opportunity comes to each of us but once, which may or may not be true. But certain it is that, to the teacher of Junior boys or girls, comes an opportunity as fleeting as it is wonderful, which never presents itself in like manner at any other period in their development, which has until quite recently been ignored. This important period of transition between middle childhood and adolescence is just beginning to receive the intelligent consideration and research that it merits, for our educators are realizing that they can no longer close their eyes to the character-building possibilities of this greatly misunderstood "in-between" stage known as later childhood.

The young minds and lives may be compared to the plastic clay which the potter may mould and shape as he wishes, but which soon becomes so firm that its form cannot be changed. Up to this period the brain has been changing and growing, but now it has attained its full size, and while still plastic, throughout the Junior years, it is fast approaching the time when the lines of thought,

which are simply the ideals and habits of life, will begin to harden and take on their permanent form.

For this reason, there are certain conditions existing at this stage of development which will never be present again in combination, and these constitute the rare opportunity of the Junior teacher. The natural tendencies and interests of the scholars are our surest guide to their needs, and in meeting them we can make upon the plastic brain cells whatever impressions we desire to see become permanent.

The habits and ideals of life which are formed now during this brief period of later childhood will largely govern the decisions and actions of adolescence and manhood, and as habits are, after all, simply actions made mechanical by repetition, it should not be hard to get our Juniors to think right and act right so often that it will become second nature to them, or as we say, habit.

The importance of this period is brought home to the teacher when he realizes that, in the words of an authority on the subject, "no harder task ever confronts a life than to break up one habit and substitute another after the brain cells grow hard." Those of us who have tried can verify this statement.

Fortunately for the teacher, the habits which are the easiest formed by Juniors are without doubt the most necessary for their development, and as has been said before, their interests point the way.

Almost invariably we find an intense love of reading, coupled with an innate instinct for hero-worship and a marvelously retentive memory. Surely the opportunity as well as the responsibility could not be plainer. The hunger for reading must be satisfied with the very best that literature offers, so that admiration for the highest and noblest types of manhood and womanhood may supply the right kind of ideals of life at the same time as the memory is storing up treasures for the future.

This is the time for presenting the Bible in terms of great heroes and heroines, and of forming the habit of regular Bible reading. But if the teacher stops there, his duty is only half done, for it is his privilege to exert a wholesome influence over all the reading-matter that the child consumes, introducing him to the hero stories of our race and of the world's great peoples, as well as to clean, wholesome fiction with the right outlook on life.

Combined with the wonderful aptitude for memorizing, we discover a great fondness for fact and detail, accuracy and drill, which again makes the teacher's duty plain. The amount of material which the Junior's brain can master and store away is almost incredible to adult minds, and through repetition and drill this process is rendered very simple.

As one writer expresses it, this is "nature's golden opportunity for treasuring up the sunshine

of literature and God's Word, where it may glow and give warmth through life," and so the wise teacher will not fail to seize upon this time for storing the brain with Bible passages, Scriptural facts and data, the great hymns of the Church and all such material which some day will not only be valuable mental equipment, but a safeguard against temptations and a strengthener of faith.

But perhaps the greatest opportunity of the Junior teacher is that of assuming the rôle of hero or heroine to the imaginative boy or girl, who instinctively and often unconsciously sets up before the mind's eye a living model of what to him or her symbolizes the best and finest things. In this unobtrusive way, through the daily living out of our Christianity, we can preach to our scholars a far more eloquent sermon than any words could formulate, and help them to the decision that the Christ whom we strive to copy shall be their life hero too.

II

HOW TO BECOME A GOOD TEACHER OF JUNIORS

THERE are a few individuals who have a sort of instinct for handling children well, and who cannot help being successful with them, but perhaps the majority of people who have to do with the instruction of boys and girls find themselves under the necessity of studying the problem and applying all their ability to its solution. The main reason why we find it a problem at all is, I believe, that most of us have forgotten how we felt and what we were interested in at that stage of our career, and so we administer instruction and advice in adult doses and then wonder why it has so little effect on the unfortunate victims. It would be an excellent mental tonic for all of us if we would refresh our memories occasionally with such books as Mark Twain's "Tom Sawyer" or "Huckleberry Finn," the "Anne" books by L. M. Montgomery, or Booth Tarkington's "Penrod" stories. Then we would cease to be shocked and surprised at the marvelous activity, the endless supply of energy, the irrepressible love of fun and noise, the desire to know, the dawning independence, and all the other characteristics which make Junior boys and girls such a difficult and yet such a fascinating study.

When we fail to interest them, let us seek the cause within ourselves before we blame them, for there are plenty of things in which they are not only interested, but deeply engrossed, if we only know where to look for them. Because a particular line of talk interests us, we naturally suppose that our pupils will also be entertained and edified by it, instead of meeting them on their own plane of interest and dealing only in terms of their experience. The Junior himself is quick to perceive whether we understand him and his problems or not, and only in so far as we have a genuine sympathy with him, can we expect really to influence him. If we can put ourselves in his place mentally and emotionally, we will be able to eliminate from our religious education much that is adult in viewpoint and spirit, and absolutely outside the realm of the child's experience. The religious teacher's difficulty is minimized when, as in the Graded Lesson Series, only subjects suitable to the age of the pupils are chosen, but much depends on the ability of the individual in presenting this material in such a way that it can be readily assimilated and applied to everyday life.

This does not mean that to be a good teacher of Juniors one must talk down to them, for nothing could be more objectionable. The Junior feels that he is no longer a child, and therefore strongly resents anything that savours of being patronized, such as a certain forced intimacy of manner and

those youthful expressions which many well-meaning teachers mistake for winsomeness and sympathy with childhood. A straightforward, natural, frank manner that implies equality and friendly interest, is more calculated to win the young person's confidence, just as a religion that emphasizes manliness and womanliness is bound to appeal to him or to her. In the same way, things which are hard to do and call forth great effort, are very much more of a challenge to him than those which lie within his power of achievement. In short, his outlook is all toward the future and the man he will soon be, and we must think of him in this way more than as a mere child.

A good leader of Juniors must be a strict disciplinarian, for the boy or the girl of this age has little respect for the teacher who has no control over his class, and soon knows when he can take advantage of him. Wisdom dictates that as much freedom as possible be allowed in the class and that variety of employment be supplied so that restless young muscles should not be taxed beyond control, but there must be a certain amount of restraint. This should be exercised in directing activities rather than in repressing them. If we expect too much composure and control from active, young creatures, we are deliberately walking into difficulties, whereas, if we provide plenty of variety for the class session and enliven the teaching by the use of stories and pictures, blackboard

and handwork, which we shall discuss in later chapters, thus directing the overflow of energy into desirable channels, there will be no need for repression.

But, after all, a teacher may be clever, resourceful, and popular with the pupils, and yet not have nearly the influence over them that he might have if he met them during the week, and joined them in some of their favourite sports and pastimes. A good teacher of Juniors realizes that this is one of the greatest opportunities for fellowship and real friendship between him and his class, and also that the rapidly developing social instincts of the boy and the girl demand this sort of companionship.

As Mrs. Lamoreaux says in "The Unfolding Life," with which every teacher should be familiar: "The world holds nothing truer and sweeter than the love of a child at this age, and it is there in every heart, awaiting the touch of the teacher who can find the hidden spring. The contact on Sunday is not sufficient, however, to reveal it. The child must know through the letter, the call, the invitation to the teacher's home, the loving sympathy in his life and interests, that the teacher wants him, not his golden text and his offering, and in this knowledge the magic spring is found." Those happy teachers who have discovered that hidden spring may be said to be the teachers who really succeed, for to them all things are possible with their boys and girls.

III

THE JUNIOR AS A HERO WORSHIPER

STAYING in the same summer cottage where I used to visit, was a lad of about twelve years who was the most enthusiastic tennis player for his age I have ever seen. Besides being quite aware of his own ability in that direction, he was rather scornful of the girls in the house and would never condescend to play a game of tennis with them. One day I challenged him to a set or two, and, to his great amazement, beat him. I could see that he was altogether nonplussed, although he said very little, but his manner to me thereafter betokened the profoundest respect. He had great admiration for any one who could outstrip him in the ability he coveted most, for just at this time his ideal was to be an expert tennis player.

According to the Chinese, an ideal is literally "The thing you have your eye on." Every Junior has an ideal which he worships because he cannot help himself. He has his eye on some particular ability that he longs to possess and wherever he sees that ability he worships it. It will invariably be embodied in a personality, for deeds are the things that count with the Junior, and the person

who can do the things he longs to do will be his hero.

So the Junior boy and girl are hero worshipers, although they are all unconscious of the fact. Physical strength and skill, daring and courage are what the boy admires most, because his own development at this period is so largely physical. He may find these characteristics in his father, perhaps in the Y. M. C. A. physical director, in his Sunday-school teacher, or in a champion baseball player, but he is just as likely to admire them in a prize-fighter, a pirate or a desperado in whom moral strength may be altogether lacking. Physical strength makes strong appeal to the girl of this age too, and not until a few years later will she admire womanly charm.

Whatever the ideal be, it is certain that the instinct of hero worship is one of the most potent forces in moulding the young life and supplying incentives to action. The teacher's great responsibility, then, is to provide the right type of heroes, those in whom physical and moral strength are closely allied, and who are worthy of imitation. "The flame of hero worship," says the writer of "The Unfolding Life," "is fed from two sources —the life of some one near to the child and the passionate delight in reading which characterizes the years from about ten to fifteen, and is especially marked from twelve to fourteen." These words make the teacher's duty very clear.

In the first place, you as a teacher are near to the child's life. What if he or she should have exalted *you* as a hero and be patterning a life after yours? Would you feel satisfied? Are you representing Christ in such a way that the child may see Him exalted in your life and want to make Him his or her hero? That is for you to decide.

The teacher has a broad field of influence in the matter of the child's reading, which so largely supplies the ideals. If you can place before your boys the Knights of King Arthur's Round Table or the heroes of ancient history in an appealing way, they will admire the strength and courage they find in them just as much as in the pirates and villains of the thrilling but trashy boys' books with which the market is flooded. Of course you would not think of recommending to him a book which lacked action and excitement, but there is enough thrill and movement in the biographies of great explorers, inventors and missionaries to satisfy even the most exacting Junior. The missionary boards of the different churches are now bringing out books that are full of the very thing you need—stories in which the spiritual heroism makes its unconscious impression along with the physical.

Now is the time to make the Bible a very dear friend to the boy and girl, and the courses of lessons in the Graded Series are planned with this very instinct for hero worship in view. The dar-

ing deeds and thrilling adventures of Old Testament heroes, of Christ and His followers that appeal to the heroic in the Junior are the very finest material on which this instinct may feed.

To sum up, I should like to quote the words of Emma A. Robinson: "Hero worship unguided produces: admiration of brute force, lawlessness, disrespect of parents, irreverence for things holy, formation of evil habits, low ambitions, ideals that degrade, taste for pernicious literature, cigarette smoking, drunkenness. Hero worship guided: high ideals, emulation of noble characters, formation of right habits through emulation, pure thought, the formation of a taste for good literature, a spirit of reverence, and the development of a strong character."

IV

THE JUNIOR'S IDEAL

WHILE trying to appeal to this instinct for hero worship in a group of Junior girls, one Sunday, I asked that each scholar think of some one person she knew and admired whom she would care to be like, some one who had the qualities she admired most. Instantly every girl began thinking, and some reached their decision quickly, but I asked them not to talk about it to any one, except their mothers. They need not tell a soul unless they wished, but simply keep the person selected before them constantly, as a help to them in making right choices.

"For," I said, "it will often help you when you have something hard to decide, if you stop and ask yourself this question, 'Would so-and-so do this?' The way you can answer that will solve the difficulty for you."

The girls went away very thoughtful, pondering over the idea, which seemed to appeal to them. Occasionally I referred to it, until I was assured that each girl had made her choice. Little did I suspect what some of these might be, until a day when I was chatting with the mother of one of my scholars.

"Perhaps I shouldn't tell you this," she said,

" but I thought you would like to hear it. You'll remember asking the girls of your class each to choose some one whom they wanted to be like; well my little Olive chose *you* as her ideal, and she told me about it most impressively that evening and what you said about making decisions. Then a few days later she came to me looking very happy, and said: 'Oh, mother, I've something so good to tell you. This afternoon I had such a hard question to decide and then I remembered what my teacher said, and when I thought "What would she do?" I knew right away that she wouldn't do what I was tempted to do, and that kept me from being very naughty.' I thought that was lovely," concluded the mother, " and I felt so grateful to you."

But to think that the child had chosen me—what a responsibility! Not once had I dreamed of such a thing, but there I was with that to live up to. But when you consider it, you or any other teacher may have some one looking up to you in the same way and thinking you well-nigh perfect. It is a staggering thought, and yet one that challenges the very best that is in you and spurs you on to live up to such a high opinion. To my mind that is one of the strongest reasons why we should have in the Junior classes of our schools men teachers for boys and women for girls, for no boy, however he may love a lady teacher, ever aims to be like her. A strong, manly man not only supplies

an ideal for the boy to look up to and measure himself by, but makes him realize that religion is a manly thing and Sunday school a worth-while place for men. If he sees all about him women and girls, he is more than likely to conclude that Sunday school is not for men and boys, then grow less and less interested and finally drop out entirely.

Of course a lady teacher of boys can feed this instinct of hero worship from the Bible, history, literature and real life, and to some extent minimize her handicap. But she will have to make these heroes very strong and very appealing if they are to stimulate the youthful mind and heart to aspire to be like them and to do brave and splendid deeds, for it is these that fire the Junior's imagination, not the good qualities. But be the teacher man or woman, the full duty is not done if one Junior passes out to a higher grade without having chosen as his or her leader and guide the one great hero of all history whose noble deeds and unselfish life every boy and girl will have learned to admire.

V

SOME LINES OF APPROACH TO JUNIORS

WHAT is it that makes one lesson dull and uninteresting to a lively class of Juniors, while another teacher's presentation of the selfsame lesson is fascinating and productive of results? The one talks glibly of missions, temperance, religion or the poor, and wonders why her class is bored or restless, while the other paints vivid pictures in story form and holds every scholar in rapt attention. Both may know the lesson equally well, and have equal ability to impart their knowledge. Where does the difference lie, if not largely in this—that one persists in presenting ideas and truths from a purely adult viewpoint; the other sees things with the eyes of a Junior and adapts her material to that person's needs.

The greatest teacher of all time made use of this principle with wonderful consistency. Were His hearers farmers?—He took the soil and the crops as His line of approach; if fishermen, He progressed naturally from the sea and the nets to the truth He wished to impress. So we find that *interests* are really the key to success in establishing lines of approach or the "point of contact in teaching," as Patterson Dubois calls it in his ad-

mirable little book of that title, which has been an inspiration to more than one teacher.

How, then, can we know the interests that are common to Juniors, and of what use can this knowledge be to us? Many a time we have realized that the weekly meeting in the Sunday school gives us very little opportunity of studying the children either collectively or individually. But we have found, with Professor Pattee, that "often a teacher may learn more of her pupil by watching him play in the yard for ten minutes than she could by studying him in the school for ten days."

If we have time to watch children in their different games and sports, when their whole soul is thrown with abandon into the pastime, we can very easily discern the impulses and interests that sway their lives. Better still, if we can *take part* in their play, how our position will be strengthened! Having skated frequently one winter with many of my pupils, I can truly say that at no other time was I ever so close to them as when actually engaging in their play. Nothing could have delighted me more than to hear that one of the girls had said in speaking of her teacher to a friend, "Why, she's just one of us girls!"

At such time stories of their school life, their chums and hobbies, their likes and dislikes have been shared and a wonderful spirit of comradeship developed. Associations of this kind that give us the child's outlook, make it the easiest

thing in the world to put whatever we have to say to them in the class, in terms of Junior experience and childhood's interests.

For one thing, we find that the spirit of *competition* plays a large part in all their games. Here is one line of approach indicated by interests. So we introduce this element into our classes by having a friendly rivalry in the Bible drill, finding different passages of Scripture, in the memory work, and even in securing regular attendance and punctuality, by dividing the class into "sides."

We discover also that the boys' pockets are always full of heterogeneous collections which point to the instinct of *accumulation* as another line of approach. Why not use this natural interest in collecting pictures for the note-books, or of curios and pictures for the missionary cabinet? There is no better way of gaining the coöperation and interest of your pupils.

We learn, too, when we gain their confidence, what books our pupils are reading, and it is our privilege to direct the eager young reader to the best books in the Sunday-school library and elsewhere. This *love of reading* creates another line of approach that makes it easy for us to present the Bible to the child as the best book of all, which he will learn to know and love as never before. At no time has the child's mind been so *eager for facts and information,* which is another line of approach that we must not neglect. Facts about

the Bible, ancient manners and customs, are some of the things he enjoys knowing about, and the wonderfully retentive power of his mind pleads for food in this important golden memory period of life.

Apart from the regular work of the class, the teacher can meet the child's interests by ministering to his *social instinct* through gatherings in the Sunday school and in her home, and to his love of outdoor life by trips to the woods and parks, wild-flower hunts, picnics and similar outings. All these things will furnish points of contact which will not only suggest and supply lines of approach, but enrich the heart and life of child and teacher alike.

VI

PROVIDING FOR JUNIORS IN A ONE-ROOMED SCHOOL

THE teacher who faces the problem of providing for Juniors in a one-roomed school is working against great odds, for no matter how ingenious she may be, she can never fully overcome all the difficulties she will meet. The only real solution to her problem is the securing of some seclusion, whether by the use of curtains or screens, or the finding of a quiet corner outside the main schoolroom, for the lesson teaching. As long as there is the faintest possibility of improvement, we should never be satisfied until we have done our utmost and secured our end. If we are content with poor conditions simply because we are not energetic enough to work for better ones, it is a sure sign that we have not the best interests of our pupils at heart.

As every teacher knows, children of all ages are more susceptible to distractions of *sight* than those of *sound,* and this is specially true of Juniors. As long as they can see what is going on about them, their teacher will find it difficult to secure their attention, but if they merely hear voices from other classes, the distraction is greatly lessened. For this reason, curtains or screens are

practically a necessity where Juniors must be taught in a room with other scholars.

If a corner of the room can be secured and curtained off, so much the better, for then the equipment that aids a teacher so wonderfully can be used and kept in a stationary place—small table, blackboard, maps, cabinet for missionary curios, honour roll, and the like. If, however, the class is obliged to meet in the centre of the room where there is no wall space, but where screens can be used for separation, the maps and posters may be pinned to them and a small lap blackboard used. A table about which the scholars may gather is a valuable addition, and in it may be kept the various class supplies.

When the other alternative is possible—the withdrawing of the class to another room for the lesson period—this should always be done, for so much greater freedom is possible when voices do not have to be subdued to a whisper. In a separate room, the expressional activities which are so necessary to the proper development of Juniors may be carried on,—the memory work, the Bible exercises which teach them to know and use their Bibles, the handwork that is prescribed in the Pupil's Quarterly, in short, the drill without which a boy or girl of the Junior age can learn and retain very little.

In many schools the number of Junior scholars is relatively large. Small groups of six to eight

are the best in this case. Individual work is thus made possible, and attention is more easily secured. If there are not enough to form a class of boys and one of girls for each year, the nine and ten-year-old boys should be grouped together, girls of these ages together, with the boys of eleven and twelve, the girls of these ages forming two other separate groups. This arrangement has been found much better than keeping boys and girls together, for at this time there is a mutual antagonism which cannot be overcome. Junior boys will often take no interest in a thing, for the simple reason that girls are interested in it too.

The Departmental Graded Lessons are a boon to the one-roomed school, for with them, all Juniors are taught the same lesson which may be adapted by the teachers to the varying needs of the different ages. When using them, the teacher is able to meet the spiritual needs of the child in each stage of his development. We have come to realize that the pupil in the small school has the same spiritual requirements as one who attends a large school, and that he has an equal right to have these needs met.

VII

THE CLASS SESSION

SOME one has said that attempting to conduct a Junior Department without a programme is like trying to cut out a dress without a pattern. You *may* be able to do it successfully, but the chances are that your service will not turn out just as you wanted it. Some part of it may occupy too much time, while another exercise may be curtailed or crowded out entirely. With a well-planned programme, written out in detail, the class session stands a far greater chance of being orderly, well balanced and productive of the desired results.

No matter what variety your programme may take on, it will of necessity contain the four elements of the following outline, into which every class session naturally divides itself.

1. Worship—in song, prayer, responsive service and offering.

2. Recognition—of birthdays and new members.

3. Instruction—lesson study in classes, marking of records, etc.

4. Expressional Work—teaching and drilling in memory work and other activities.

In the first place, the worship for each day's session should be carefully planned to harmonize in thought with the teaching of the lesson. First,

there may be one or two bright songs chosen with this idea in mind, then a short, earnest prayer, during which no stragglers are allowed to enter the room, followed by the prayerful singing of one of the great hymns of the Church, such as "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty." In this way the Juniors are helped to feel the true spirit of prayer. Then there may be Scripture responses, in which the boys and girls will participate eagerly, with the teacher or superintendent leading in the repetition of material previously learned.

When it comes to the offering, we must not insult Junior boys and girls by asking them to march up to the front and put their money in a bank or basket, or sing "Hear the Pennies Dropping," when what they can appreciate most is to have a treasurer of their own, elected monthly, to take charge of the class offering. Our next talk will give some helpful suggestions for the offering service, for at this age we must model our service more on that of the upper school than of the Primary Department, remembering that the Junior is no longer to be considered a child.

In a one-hour session the period of worship may occupy fifteen minutes, but the recognition of birthdays and new members should not exceed five minutes. Most of us err in giving this part of the programme too much prominence in proportion to its educational value, and in making the exercise too juvenile. The bulk of the time should be given to the class instruction, not less than

twenty minutes, and more if at all possible. The teacher who knows exactly how much time she has at her disposal can plan her lesson so that it will be complete in the given period, and she will not have to make the all too common confession: "I didn't nearly finish the lesson."

No less important in many ways is the expressional work which may precede or follow the lesson, occupying at least fifteen minutes of the hour. Learning the great hymns of the Church and the fine memory passages of the Bible is a task for this period which the pastor can help on most effectively by making use of such material in the regular church services. This work should be reviewed constantly, for the Junior is at the drill age. Learning to name the books of the Bible and finding passages of Scripture are also made very attractive by the drill method, introducing the spirit of friendly rivalry.

Many useful suggestions for expressional activities suited to the Quarter's lessons are planned in connection with the Graded Lesson Series. The teacher whose session includes no time for such activities, is missing an opportunity for building the Bible into the pupil's life and character which will never again come in the same way, and which is the right of every Junior boy and girl.

Five minutes may be taken for the announcements, the closing prayer and the distribution of papers, thus bringing to a close an impressive and well-ordered session.

VIII

THE OFFERING SERVICE

IS it worth while devoting any time to a special offering service, many teachers wonder, or should we simply take up the collection in the quickest way and hurry on to the more impressive and religious part of our programme? Surely we are missing a great opportunity if we accept whatever our boys and girls bring without comment or suggestion, thus allowing the habit of giving to become mechanical and disinterested. When we realize that the impulses that actuate true giving are the very basis of character building, we must admit that the offering is one of the vital parts of our service and should be made as impressive and inspiring as is possible.

If the Juniors themselves pass the plates or baskets, and bring in the offering, the interest will be increased, and if one is chosen from each class the matter will be expeditiously attended to. A few carefully selected responses spoken and sung by superintendent and scholars in turn, will help to bring out the reasons for giving, and the way in which we should give. The following is a suggested outline, which may be varied to suit the needs of the occasion.

Superintendent—What kind of givers does God love?

All sing—"Why We Give" from "Junior Hymns and Carols," while the offering is being received, if desired.

Superintendent—From whom do all good gifts come?

All sing—"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father"—from "Melodies."

Superintendent—Why should we give?

All sing—"Jesus said, 'Freely ye have received, freely give,'"—from "Melodies."

Superintendent—What was God's best gift to us?

All repeat—"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Superintendent—How may we give to God?

All repeat—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Then, while the pianist plays softly some tune like the Offertory March from "Songs for Little People," the child from each class who has collected the offering takes it to the front, and stands with the others before the platform while all sing, with bowed heads:

"All things come from Thee, O Lord,
And of Thine own have we given to Thee. Amen."
—Offertory March.

After placing the offering on the desk, the scholars return quietly to their seats, while the pianist plays softly. Instead of the song, a prayer may be offered up by the superintendent, or a verse repeated by all as a prayer, such as:

"Father bless the gifts we bring Thee,
Give them something sweet to do.
May they help some one to love Thee,
Father, may we love Thee too. Amen."

I have seen this offering service, or something similar carried out most impressively many times, and it never fails to rouse an intelligent, reverent response.

But can the Junior who simply hands in money that his parents have given him for collection, understand or feel anything of the true spirit of giving? It is an easy thing to offer some one else's money as a gift, but it is not real giving in the truest sense, until the boy brings, of his own free will, something that he has himself earned. To part with money of his very own entails genuine sacrifice, and no matter how trifling the amount may be, it is vastly more to be desired than a larger sum given mechanically from some one else's pocket. Every normal, healthy child has a certain earning capacity which should be turned to account for altruistic purposes if he is ever to

form the habit of thinking of others. As one writer aptly puts it, "The Junior age is the time to emphasize the systematic giving of money which will have value in so far as the child realizes that the money is his own. On account of the new interest in the things he possesses, times of self-denial are very apropos."

Clearly, then, our first duty is to arouse the Junior's interests to the point where he will be not only willing but eager to give to the causes of the Sunday school. We start at the wrong end when we emphasize first the need of the work, instead of appealing to the imagination and natural interests of the young mind by picturing the heroism of the missionary, the every-day life of the child in the far-off land, or the privations of the famine sufferers we wish to aid. Such generalities as Missions, the Poor, and Temperance are not apt to fire any normal child's imagination or awaken his interest, but a vivid, stirring human-interest story never fails. And the subtle power of suggestion is such that before we have made our appeal, our young hearers are wondering what they can do to help. Haven't you often found it so, when the story was made intensely real?

Too often we hear the time-honoured announcement by a well-meaning teacher or superintendent, "The offering to-day is for Missions," or "The collection to-day is to go toward the Famine Fund," and we wonder just how much the young

givers realize or care about the cause to which they are asked to contribute. The tendency in such cases is for the giving to become a purely mechanical exercise, instead of being made vital and real and appealing. Not until we have succeeded in arousing a desire to give as a result of *interest* in the cause, have we begun to teach our Juniors anything of the philosophy of giving. And who knows but we might have more consistent, generous givers in our churches to-day, if we but realized the importance of starting our boys and girls out in life with a true conception of giving and some appreciation of the possibilities of self-denial.

IX

THE PROBLEM OF SECURING ATTENTION

CAN you tell if your class is paying attention? Certainly, you say, they sit perfectly still and don't speak a word while I'm teaching. They pay strict attention. But *do* they? Are they really *taking in* what you say? If teaching were simply a process of pouring out information from your mind to the pupil's, it would be a simple matter, but certain mental processes have to take place in the pupil before he has grasped your idea at all. So he must be *active*, not *passive* if he is to receive anything from your teaching, and mere silence on his part does not mean attention.

Put this to the test for yourself next Sunday. Ask some simple question of that quiet child with the far-away look whom you consider one of your best scholars, chiefly because she is not a disturber of the peace. In all probability she will be unable to answer, for her mind has been a blank all the while she was gazing steadfastly at you, apparently paying the best of attention. I have found this state of affairs time and time again, especially while serving as a "supply" teacher, when I had a splendid chance of studying a number of pupils.

That is why I give this warning to teachers, for

I believe that more children than we dream of are becoming mentally lazy and are allowing their wits to "go wool gathering" as we say, when we fondly believe them to be drinking in every word. Once a habit of this kind becomes fixed, it is a serious handicap to a person and a very hard one to throw off. A motto that I have set before me in my teaching is, "Every child mentally alert." We cannot afford to have even one scholar day-dreaming away the few precious moments we have at our disposal each week for character-building and instruction in the vital things of life.

But what can you do if you discover such a condition of mental inertia in one or more members of your class? Nip it right in the bud! Don't give that boy or girl time to relax attention from the moment you start. Ply the inattentive one with questions or announce at the start that he will tell the lesson story over after you have finished. If you do this frequently, occasionally not choosing beforehand who is to retell the story, every member of the class will be keen and mentally alert, for no one likes to display a lack of ability in the presence of his chums.

This method is also successful in dealing with pupils who are deliberately inattentive and annoying. Nervous or restless children need some sort of relaxation, such as can be provided by the use of the blackboard or pencils and pads, on which they may illustrate some point of the lesson, or if

time permits, by a discussion and an examination of the note-books which are so necessary a part in the working out of the Graded Lessons.

When you say appealingly, "*Do* pay attention!" or snap your fingers or give a stern command, how much do you gain by it? Nothing, beyond a momentary attention, unless you follow this up with something that is interesting enough in itself to hold your pupils' interest. Psychologists tell us that the really good teacher never uses this method, but secures and retains attention by questions, curiosity and suspense, appeal to interests, variety, relaxation and by putting his whole soul into the teaching.

One thing is certain, that without the attention of the class, a teacher can accomplish very little. As Trumbull puts it: "There are a good many things which you would like to have in a scholar, which, after all, you can get along without; but attention is not one of these. A scholar may lack knowledge, he may lack brightness, he may lack a good disposition, and yet he may be taught by you. But while a scholar lacks attention, teaching him is an impossibility."

In our next talk we will consider the problem of the boy who is deliberately inattentive.

X

THE BOY WHO MAKES TROUBLE IN THE CLASS

NOT every class, but quite a number of them, boast of one boy who is always trying to "break up the meeting," so to speak, and usually succeeds in doing it. He is, as a rule, not an average boy, and not a bad boy, but one in whom certain qualities, good in themselves, have become obnoxious. Perhaps he wants himself conspicuous, or maybe he is just full of mischief and bubbling over with misguided energy. Very rarely indeed is he really bad, but he can nevertheless ruin a splendid lesson, distract everybody's attention and make the other boys do unbelievable things.

One such boy whom I have in mind possessed a remarkable power over the other lads, who were well behaved when not under his influence, but would act like wild men when he started something. No amount of appealing to him or them helped matters any and it seemed as though the only remedy was to get rid of him. But it was decided to give him a last chance, and to put his misdirected talents to some worth-while use. He was a born leader, fearless and resourceful, and could be depended upon to carry through to a

finish anything he undertook. These characteristics could be made use of in a class organization, the teacher decided, so organize they did, with Master Troublemaker as President of the Club, or as he preferred to call himself, "head of the gang."

From then on, instead of being the object of discipline, he was the enforcer of it, and no nonsense would be tolerated while he was in the chair. Each class session was opened by a short club meeting, presided over by Master Troublemaker, in which all class business was settled with characteristic dispatch. The teacher (who rightly was a man, for no woman, however skilful, should be asked to cope with the task of handling a group of Junior boys) then took charge and the lesson proceeded without the slightest interruption.

The club president acted as class policeman throughout the whole period, but the disturbing element was lacking, now that the main agitator was removed, for normal boys of this age follow authority naturally. As one writer states the case: "The social instinct which drives the child into the group or gang, also forces upon him the necessity of organization and a recognition of the necessity of obedience to authority. The Junior boy wants to play the game according to the rules." That explains why the teacher who cannot control his class loses the respect of its members, and might just as well stop teaching.

Through the class organization and its mid-week activities the teacher became acquainted with his boys in a way he never supposed possible. He was a busy man, but the time reserved for his class was never interfered with by other demands. Soon there grew up between him and them a beautiful friendship founded on mutual sympathy and understanding, and his staunchest supporter was none other than Master Troublemaker, who had completely outgrown his name.

Other teachers had given up the class in despair, and it had been labelled a lot of *bad* boys with a ringleader who was *the worst ever*. But this teacher knew the two great secrets for winning boys—give them something to do and "lay hold of the heart instead of the coat collar" as some one has aptly put it. True, it was a slower but a surer way, for the one who has found the key to a boy's heart can do just about what he likes with that boy. After all, is not the saying pretty true, that there is really no *boy* problem,—the problem is one of *leadership?*

XI

WHAT CAN BE DONE WITH AN OVERFLOW OF ENERGY

"THE hardest class in the school; no teacher has ever stayed with them very long;" "They're a problem, all right," and similar expressions of opinion were not very reassuring, to say the least, but the class of boys was mine, to make or mar. Taking them individually, they were bright, interesting lads from whom one would never expect trouble, but collectively they had gained the unenviable reputation of being an *impossible* class. Now what was the trouble?

At a glance I took in the fact that the group was too large, for there were fully fifteen lively boys seated around the room, completely surrounding the teacher's table and chair. No teacher so situated could command the attention of fifteen boys, I realized, for while all was peaceful and calm in front, undreamed-of plots might be brewing in the rear.

The first step was to have the class divided, for six or seven of such boys are all that one teacher can reasonably expect to know personally and influence effectively. One of the best ways to avoid failure is to refuse to attempt what is ob-

viously impossible or inadvisable, and the class was now no impossibility, as events proved.

It did not take long to discover that the main difficulty was the abounding energy and vitality of each boy, the display of which called for an infinite amount of patience. Even when they really tried, the lads could no more sit perfectly still and pay close attention for twenty minutes at a stretch, than they could have taught the lesson themselves. I found it easy to agree with the person who said that boys at this age have "a thousand springs with which to wriggle, but not one with which to sit still." But, apart from that, these lads were altogether delightful—frank in the extreme, keenly interested in anything active, groping after knowledge of every description, eagerly absorbing everything that came their way.

When I came to know them intimately, it was not hard to understand why they were mischievous and inattentive and even rough and noisy at times; it was because their interests and ideals lay purely in the physical realm. The lad who could show the largest muscular development was much more to be envied than the chap who could answer the most questions on last week's lesson. To be strong, to overcome obstacles, to exhibit his physical power, to be a big, sturdy man, was practically each boy's sole aim in life, so it was little wonder that he often appeared more as an un-

restrained hoodlum than really a civilized human being.

To have allowed this overflow of animal spirits to exhaust my patience or destroy my composure would have been a short cut to losing the respect of the lads. Clearly there was but one way out of the difficulty, and that was to provide every possible outlet for this superfluous physical energy by the use of things that involved activity—maps, blackboards and stereoscope, constructive work such as modeling and making sand maps, and other forms of manual work which are expressional as well as educative and would give the boys a chance to use their muscles, even though the larger muscles which they liked best to exercise, must be temporarily inactive.

While this was being done as well as resources and space would permit, I would just have to put up with a great deal of animal spirits and overlook what could not be overcome, for I knew that one might as well attempt to cork up an active volcano as try to make a red-blooded boy of Junior age into a quiet, peace-loving, passive, and sober-minded individual. Many a teacher has tried and either failed hopelessly or succeeded in making himself heartily disliked for his lack of sympathy.

Was I disappointed in the boys? you ask. With such a standard it would have been hard to be. The class activity was new to them and simply revised their whole idea of Sunday school as a

place "where a fellow had to sit up like a statue and be talked at," as one chap expressed it. Not only were there fewer outbursts of pent-up energy and much less general unrest, but the very fact that they were understood and allowed a reasonable amount of freedom made the boys less rebellious against authority. In short, there was no more trouble from that class and I found much real enjoyment in teaching it.

But if it isn't one problem, it is another, and in a few months I was facing one that caused me some anxiety.

XII

A VOID THAT MUST BE FILLED

WHEN Tom and Dick came to me one Sunday after school and asked if they might bring two of their day-school friends who wanted to join the class next Sunday, it was hard to decide just what to do. The class was large enough, and we were getting along beautifully; but, as the four boys were chums, it seemed too bad to turn the newcomers away to another class. So I agreed to the proposition, and the new boys arrived the following Sunday. My fears were far from being quieted at sight of the two, for they were both big, self-willed chaps, apparently accustomed to leading and having their own way in most things.

It was not long after they joined the class before these tendencies began to manifest themselves to an almost alarming degree. The two new lads were gradually getting the rest of the class completely under their sway, and one of the pair automatically became the ringleader of the crowd. Obviously there was mischief brewing, judging by the whispered consultations and the general air of mystery that hung over everything, on one Sunday in particular.

I did not need to ask any questions to be certain that these bigger boys had decided to form some sort of secret society amongst the class members, and I felt sure no good would come of it, for I had found that they were fellows who spent a great deal of their time on the street, and were beginning to break away from home authority. To be sure, all these youngsters were developing social instincts that demanded an outlet of some sort, for they seemed to crave the companionship of other fellows of their own age. If they joined in with these new boys, they would be simply following the natural tendencies of all Juniors to congregate in gangs or cliques, for the sake of comradeship. And because they were Juniors, they would at once start doing something. Realizing these things, I determined that the companionship should be secured under some kind of oversight and the " something to do " be of the right sort.

Without delay I made plans of attack, for there was no time to lose. A note to each member calling the class to assemble at my home on secret business on a certain evening brought every boy on the tick of the hour, all agog with curiosity. That very night the fellows themselves formed the " Three M's Club," with every one a sworn-in member, pledged to secrecy and loyalty. A club motto, badge and password were chosen, a leader appointed and other such important matters duly arranged. It was the first real club for each one

of these lads and this was a most auspicious occasion. For where is the Junior who does not love secrecy, regalia, the club spirit and all that goes to make up such an organization? An admiration for these things seems to be an inborn part of every boy's make-up, at this stage of his development. So why not give them to him in a wholesome way, backed by the Church and the Sunday school, instead of allowing other agencies to fill this place in his life?

To make a long story short, the club flourished and kept the boys engaged in so many useful activities, that its influence soon pervaded every day in the week and every hour of every boy's life. The doubtful gang never materialized and the two chaps who had been accustomed to play on the street found themselves too busy doing more interesting things to spare any time for dark plots and questionable schemes which might before long have blossomed forth into hoodlumism and even lawlessness.

Surely, if we watch our Juniors as we would a barometer, and forestall every need as we see it developing, can we not keep them from ever going beyond the influence of the Sunday school to satisfy any of the requirements of their unfolding life?

XIII

THE SPICE OF TEACHING

DID you ever stop to realize how much more pleasure something unexpected gives you, than what you counted on and knew would happen? A pleasant surprise is always a delight because it has in it the element of novelty and so awakens interest. A life that goes on in the same old rut, day in and day out, without a single unexpected happening or surprise event, is a pretty monotonous affair, is it not? Then what about a Sunday-school class that does the very same thing? Such a class, and there are many I know, needs a good waking up and a sound jolting out of its complacency, for to it variety, which is the spice of teaching, is unknown.

Every teacher needs variety and plenty of it, and should try to avoid having any two sessions exactly alike. Of course the general plan of procedure may be the same each week, but some new feature should be introduced whenever possible, or the old ones varied to prevent monotony. It is so easy to jog along at the old rate, taking it for granted that your scholars will be interested and edified, as a matter of course; but try to imagine their interest in a story keeping up to the end, if they knew all the time what was going to happen. An extremely fascinating and truly wonderful

book it would have to be, wouldn't it, for young people of all ages love the spice of life, and demand change, movement, novelty and surprise.

More than once I have seen a restless, disinterested class of boys or girls transformed into a wide-awake, intent, eager group when something unexpected or unusual happened in the class. Immediately that keen if-I-don't-watch-out-I'll-miss-something feeling took the place of the old languid it's-only-the-same-old-thing-so-I-can-go-to-sleep attitude, and I had every one of them right with me. Gideon realized this great power of surprise when he planned his torch and pitcher night attack on the Midianites, and he *took them by surprise* in more than one sense of the term. If the teacher would plan surprises as ingeniously, there would be no disinterested or restless scholars.

Of course your ability to make these unexpected moves depends largely on how your class is situated. The more isolated your position is, the more unusual and novel can be your programme of course, and the younger your scholars, the more variety and movement they will require. But even a teacher without a private classroom can plan a number of interesting surprises, if he or she but gives the matter a little thought.

For instance, if you have been in the habit of reading the lesson aloud, verse about, with your class, try to imagine how uninteresting this must be for them, as the unusual Bible phraseology of a new lesson can convey very little meaning to

young minds. Sometimes postponing the reading until the subject matter has been made clear by the teaching of the lesson is an agreeable change, as the boys and girls understand it then and read intelligently. When the lesson is a particularly difficult one, omit the Scripture reading altogether and substitute a Bible drill which gives excellent practice in locating passages of Scripture, the one who succeeds first having the privilege of reading the selection. At other times, when the lesson is in conversational style, as frequently occurs, have the speeches read in dialogue form, different scholars impersonating the characters.

Often an interesting object can be used to advantage to supply the touch of novelty and surprise, but be sure it illustrates the thought of the lesson and does not distract attention from it. The blackboard with its many possibilities should never be ignored, as it is an ever-ready source of variety and interest, and can transform the often dull review lesson into the most enjoyable one of the whole quarter. Handwork of different kinds is always popular among Juniors, but too few teachers attempt it. Pictures and maps used at the right time are reliable means of varying the teaching, and there are so many others which the wise teacher ought to be ready to produce at a minute's notice, that he should feel equal to any emergency. But if there is plenty of variety and surprise planned beforehand for each class session, there will not be so many emergencies.

XIV

THE BOY WHO WILL NOT STUDY HIS LESSON

"MY worst trouble," said a Sunday-school teacher, "is in getting my Juniors to study the lesson. I know I shouldn't just tell them the story the way they do to the Beginners and Primary scholars, but when I try to draw them out and ask questions about the lesson, I can't rouse the least bit of interest, for not one of them looks at a Quarterly before coming to Sunday school. What *can* I do?"

"Do you encourage them to make some preparation and remind them of it?" I asked.

"Indeed I do. My last words every Sunday are, '*Be sure to study your lesson* this week, so that you will be able to answer questions next Sunday,'" was the earnest reply.

"But do you suppose those youngsters have the faintest notion of what you mean by *studying the lesson?*"

The teacher looked thoughtful for a moment. "I believe that's the trouble," she said at last. "It never occurred to me to give them something *definite* to do, but I wonder if that wouldn't work?"

I knew of several cases where it had, so I said

by way of encouragement, "Suppose you try it. Every teacher of Juniors has just the same trouble as you have to contend with, and I, for one, know how discouraging it is, especially with boys, though girls are almost as big a problem. The only way I have found to encourage the scholars to do any lesson study in advance was to assign some very definite work for each week. Even that takes time and patience, but it works."

Three months later I met this same teacher at a convention, and when I asked what luck she had had with the lesson study problem, she volunteered her experience.

"Although I have never once told my class to *study the lesson,* they have done some splendid studying during the past few weeks, without realizing it. The secret of it was that I asked them to do some one concrete thing that they understood and could follow out, without spending too much time at it, for they all have quite a lot of home work in connection with their day schools, I discovered.

"The first Sunday I gave out slips of paper, having written on each the chapter and verse number of a passage of Scripture which I wanted each scholar to be prepared to read from his Bible and explain at our next meeting. On that occasion I called upon them in order and, to their amazement and intense interest, the lesson passage was read consecutively, two verses by each person present.

This was followed by a most helpful discussion in which each scholar endeavoured to throw light on his particular verses, which revealed the fact that in almost every case the adjoining passages had been read and puzzled out also.

"The following Sunday the lesson was a well-known Bible story, so I asked the boys to read the lesson passage carefully and come prepared to tell the story in their own words, as I might call on any one present. The next week I asked them to practise drawing the map of Palestine which appeared in their Quarterlies and announced that they would all be given a chance to draw it on the class blackboard, when I would judge their efforts. This proved to be great fun and disclosed the fact that four of the boys had marked artistic ability. In future their assignment was frequently something to draw on the board, or possibly at home during the week.

"One of the interesting features was that each fellow was to keep secret what his particular work for the next Sunday might be, and never show any one his slip of paper, which assigned his task, as well as proving a reminder to him. So the boys were always as anxious to know what the others would have, as they were to make a success of whatever part they were called upon to play.

"I can't begin to tell you all the different things we did, but there proved to be no end of variety to the work. Sometimes we used pads and pencils

in the class, sometimes the note-books all the boys were making, occasionally the wall map, and nearly always the blackboard and the individual Bibles. Whatever we did the interest kept up, and before long not a scholar wanted to miss a single session because no two were the same, and best of all, even the most indifferent were taking part and actually studying the lesson."

This experience can be duplicated, I believe, by any teacher who considers the results worth the time and thought, for, of course, it would have to be carefully planned out each week. Fifteen minutes added to the usual time of preparation should take care of these assignments, and would be time well spent. When once the habit is acquired, ideas suggest themselves during the study of the lesson, and each week it becomes less of a task.

XV.

HOW TEACHERS AND PARENTS MAY GET TOGETHER

"IF the parents only took an interest and tried to help a little, how much more I could accomplish with the boys and girls." So the teacher of the Juniors often somewhat impatiently exclaims, while at the same time more than one parent may be thinking, "I'd like to help son's or daughter's teacher if I only knew how to go about it, or what I could do." Thus things go on in about the same way, and parents and teacher, who are both working toward the same end, that of developing and enriching the child-life, fail to coöperate, or in other words, to get together.

It is very easy for us as teachers to lay all the blame on the parents, but I venture to say that in nine cases out of ten if we asked ourselves pointedly: "Have I done my share to enlist the interest and sympathy of the parents?" we should be forced to admit that we hadn't gone even *half-way* in bridging the gap. We are such busy people that we hesitate to add to our responsibilities, little realizing what great results might be obtained by even a slight effort on our part.

What, then, can you as a busy teacher do that will really count, without requiring too much time? Do you call at the home even once a year and have a friendly chat with the mother of each

scholar? Do you send a cheery note or a few flowers when the child is sick; a game or a home-made puzzle to while away the long hours when he is recovering? Aren't these simple methods within the reach of every one, for even in country districts there are the telephones and the rural mail delivery.

Have you ever had the parents refuse a definite invitation to attend the Sunday school on a special occasion? Most of them don't think of coming unless invited by the teacher, but are only too glad to do so if they are really wanted. Then is your chance to have an exhibition of the work the Juniors have done—note-books, bookmarks, maps, illustrated hymns and the like, which will arouse the interest and coöperation of some mothers or fathers who may have discouraged the work chiefly because they didn't understand and wondered what it was all about. I have found this one of the most helpful means, when time did not permit frequent visiting.

Social gatherings of parents and children in the Sunday school develop friendliness and good spirit, but cannot take the place of the occasional Sunday visit to the class, which shows the parents the nature of the work and the kind of teaching their children are receiving.

The ways in which the parents can help to make the teacher's lot an easier one are many, and often need only to be suggested to be acted upon.

Getting the children to school regularly, on time, and with their offering, depends largely on the co-operation of the home, while securing regular use of the Junior Quarterly, the daily Bible Reading, and the making of note-books, is practically impossible unless some one who sees the child oftener than does the teacher, tactfully jogs his memory occasionally, is ready with help in case of difficulty, and makes the results to be obtained seem worth the effort. Most parents are only too glad to have their child form the habits of daily Bible reading and systematic giving, as well as to see him storing away memory gems at this period when the memory is so receptive and so eager for food. If they will hear him the memory passages and encourage him in talking about the lesson each Sunday after school, the boy or girl will not only be greatly helped but delighted that his parents take such an interest in what he is learning. Of course there may be an occasional case where your efforts will not be appreciated, but this will be more than compensated by the genuine support you will receive from the majority of the parents.

In many other ways which I have not mentioned the teacher can make of the home an invaluable ally, which will render his teaching doubly effective and increase his joy in the great work he has in hand. But let him guard against the mistake which one well-meaning teacher made in taking only her troubles to the parents of her scholars, as we shall see presently.

XVI

TWO WAYS OF SETTLING TROUBLE

AT the very outset, when I undertook that "hard" class of Junior boys I have mentioned before, I picked out two lads in the group who were absolutely unapproachable. No amount of friendly advances on my part could rouse the faintest response from them, and they remained stolid and almost sullen. They were not a disturbing element, in so far as their conduct was concerned, but it distressed me to have two members of my class so evidently unsympathetic and cold.

Failing to relieve the situation, I went to their former teacher for an explanation, and the history of her dealing with these two chaps furnished a clue to the mystery. They had been the two "worst boys" in the class, and as they had grown more and more uncontrollable and every effort on her part had failed to change them, she had resorted to the only sure method known to her, that of reporting to their parents.

In each case the father was very severe and unrelenting, and the punishment meted out had evidently been sufficient to bring the offenders to time, for they had been exemplary scholars ever since.

But the teacher was far from satisfied, for she realized that fear alone was responsible for the change and that down in their hearts both boys hated her for having " told " and brought parental displeasure to bear on them. No doubt they had deserved it, but the method had not produced the desired results, as the lads had not been themselves since the occurrence.

And I did not wonder, for no boy likes to be " told on," especially in a matter which should be settled between himself and the one he has wronged. Every teacher appreciates the advantage of the coöperation of the home, and strives to secure it, but this sort of thing could hardly be called coöperation when it achieves the estrangement of the pupil from his teacher. It may in very rare cases be necessary, but it is never the best way.

At this period of life the boy and girl give evidences of a dawning spirit of independence, which makes them more anxious to fight their own battles and decide things for themselves; in short, to break away from the ties of authority. While there may be exceptions, observation and study have shown that, in the words of Dr. G. Stanley Hall, " Love for the parents is probably at its lowest ebb at this period," from eight to twelve. Regrettable as this may be, this very spirit of independence, if guided into right channels, may be made one of the most effective means of emphasizing the responsibility of right choices and de-

veloping a strong character that will do the right because it has become habitual and not through fear of external authority.

It took some little time and tact to get these two boys who now behaved so well because they were afraid to do otherwise, and who would have stayed away if they had dared, to realize that I considered them old enough to answer for their deeds themselves and settle their own troubles and that I did not mean to carry tales. Gradually their confidence in a teacher returned, and, as they found themselves being treated more like young men than children, they repaid the trust put in them by acting in a manly fashion. Any further trouble, which occurred very rarely, now that we understood one another, was settled between ourselves, which not only made the class atmosphere more congenial, but gave to each boy a deep feeling of his own independent responsibility for his life and conduct.

XVII

RIVALRY AMONGST JUNIORS

IT may seem strange, but it is none the less true, that one of the strongest instincts or impulses by which Junior boys and girls are actuated is the spirit of rivalry or competition. In their work as well as in their play we see this force operating, although the Junior himself would be the last to realize it. Analyzing it, we find it to be a desire not only to succeed, to make good at every undertaking, but to receive a certain amount of recognition from his compeers and attain to a degree of prominence among his associates. For at this period of development praise and approval from his equals mean more to him than they do from any other source, on account of the budding social instincts now asserting themselves, as witnessed by the "gang" and the club which are so prevalent between the ages of nine and twelve.

Well, then, if the Junior takes great delight in competition, the progressive teacher will most certainly convert it into an effective tool for class work, for there is scarcely an activity into which this spirit of rivalry may not be introduced with advantage. The competition may be individual, pitting one scholar against another, or it may be

collective, with one group competing against the other, or the whole class against another class. The teacher who is handicapped by having boys and girls together in the same class, will find it distinct advantage to have the girls working against the boys, for the two do not pull well together at this age. Experience has shown that it is utter folly to expect team work between boys and girls of the Junior period, for there is sure to be a good deal of "showing-off" on the part of the boys especially, and no end of friction from one cause or another, so the sooner they are separated the better for all concerned.

A great deal might be said on the various ways in which competition may be aroused in a Junior class, but space will permit of only a brief outline, which, however, may prove suggestive. In the matter of attendance, splendid results may be obtained by the collective method, dividing the class into opposing sides, the "Reds" and the "Blues" for instance, and offering a pennant for the side amassing the best score for regular attendance and punctuality. The same idea works well in a campaign for increasing membership. Of course the success of such an undertaking depends largely on the spirit that is infused into it by the teacher, who must keep up the interest and stimulate the spirit of rivalry until the contest closes.

When it comes to missionary giving, any amount of enthusiasm can be aroused by a well conducted

campaign for raising money, setting aside a definite period of time and using a thermometer, clock, or some such device for registering the offerings and spurring on the opposite sides to surpass each other.

In note-book work, which is such a fascinating and instructive part of our Junior lessons that no teacher can afford to let his class do without it, individual rivalry is brought into play. Each scholar does the assigned work at home in his book to the best of his ability and on the following Sunday presents it in the class where it is marked by the teacher and admired by his classmates. A prize may be offered for the best book for the entire quarter, but I have found that the competition itself is sufficient incentive and an Honour Roll on the wall bearing different coloured stars after the names to denote the varying degrees of excellence, provides ample recognition and reward. A display of the completed note-books to which the parents are invited, is also an excellent thing for any class to undertake.

We all know how necessary class *drill* is in this "golden memory period" when the scholars can store away incredible amounts of material if they but have it presented in an attractive manner. Nothing will help more than this competitive spirit which will spur the Juniors on to achieve what would otherwise be impossible. I have frequently had scholars memorize twice the assigned number

of Scripture passages simply for the satisfaction of being able to excel all the others. This applies also to the work of getting acquainted with the Bible—learning the names of the Books of the Old and New Testaments and finding passages of Scripture speedily, the one who succeeds first having the honour of reading the verse aloud.

In all these varied forms of class activity the teacher must not only keep the interest in the competition keen and the enthusiasm unflagging, but must guard against any bitterness or petty meanness which may creep into the contest.

Through friendly good-natured rivalry the boys and girls will learn many of life's most important lessons, not the least of them being that to be a good loser is even greater than to be a good winner.

XVIII

THE USE OF STORIES

THOSE of us who have to do with Juniors know that they have passed the stage where the lesson may be best presented simply as an interesting story. At this age we try to *draw out* rather than to *pour in,* having the class as the teacher. On this account, many teachers of Juniors fail to use the story at all and thereby lose a powerful ally in their work. For not only does the Junior still retain his love of stories, but the story is and always will be one of the most effective means of appealing to both old and young. As one writer says, "This means of influence never loses its power, if it be used with tactful adaptation to changing interests and motives."

That is where the teacher may show his skill and tact, for plenty of each is needed to choose and adapt the material at hand to suit the varying needs and interests of the boys and girls. To tell to Juniors a simple, child's tale with a moral appended, is, of course, worse than no story at all, for it makes them feel that they are being talked down to, which is fatal. Needless to say, fairy tales are also out of the question. But a story which is logical, full of action, and above all, true to life, will impress the Junior's mind more than hours of exhortation.

Stories interspersed throughout the lesson period do for it what pictures do for the monotonous printed pages of a book. Professor Edward Porter St. John, in his "Stories and Story-Telling," which, by the way, every teacher should own, makes the following statements: "The tactful use of stories certainly does make the lesson less formal and more pleasing to the average learner. The pupil approaches with anticipations the teacher who thus gives his lessons the touch of life in the concrete and of human interest, and the simple establishment of such a sympathetic and friendly relationship is a long step toward success in teaching."

To assure a good beginning also, for a lesson, there is no better aid than the story, which instantly arouses interest, secures attention and creates an atmosphere of unity between teacher and class right at the start, which augurs well for the helpfulness and inspiration of the whole period. For this purpose we may use a Bible story not in the lesson, but teaching a similar truth, a biographical sketch of some great man or woman who achieved fame in some such way as the hero of the lesson, or an impressive incident from our own experience which follows out the line of thought taken by the lesson. An excellent motto for the teacher to keep before his mind's eye might well be: A GOOD STORY IS A GOOD BEGINNING. Nor can anything be made more ef-

fective for a lesson closing than a good story well told, but it is not always possible to time the end of the lesson period accurately enough for this. In short, if we have to make a choice between the two, always let the story precede the lesson, for, as Dr. William Byron Forbush puts it, "The first five, and not the last five minutes of the session, are the crisis of Sunday-school teaching, because attention is won or lost then."

Tantalizing as it often seems, the Junior's test of a story is usually, "Is it true?" and if you can say that it is, you are sure of a more responsive audience. Consequently, the teacher who draws his illustrative material from real life, past or present, will find his stories much more in demand than if they were purely imaginative. If they are full of facts and information, unobtrusively interwoven with their fabric, they will satisfy the Junior's thirst for these very things; if they relate the achievements of adult life they will feed his forward-looking spirit; if they prove that the good and the true always win out in the end, they will furnish him with standards of living and satisfy his love of justice and fair play; but if they simply amuse and entertain him, they are an absolute waste of valuable time.

In our next talk we shall discuss in greater detail, just the kind of stories which should be given to our Juniors and some of the likely places where they may be found.

XIX

REACHING THE JUNIOR THROUGH HIS FANCY

BUT while the Junior is matter-of-fact to an extreme, logical and a realist, we must not imagine that he cannot be appealed to through his fancy. For at this age he is a peculiar mixture of fact and fancy, realism and idealism, the doer and the dreamer. He has reached the stage where he seldom, if ever, thinks of the child he has been, but rather of the man he will be, and everything he comes in contact with consciously or unconsciously influences these ideals.

Educators agree in the verdict, that one of the most powerful influences in this realm is the story the Junior reads or hears. "Stories are the oldest form of transmitted culture, and the most formative," said Richard G. Moulton, and we who have watched their effect on the plastic child mind must agree with him. For the story is simply life pictured in words and the story-teller can make attractive and worth while whatever sort of life he wishes. If he can but stir the feelings of his hearers, he can influence them as he wills, for the simple reason that, in the words of Professor Edward Porter St. John, "All the energy of the moral life

is in the feelings, and the story stirs these as law and even exhortation never can."

From the many kinds of stories obtainable, the teacher of Juniors must make a very careful selection, using only those that illustrate principles or stir the emotional life in a wholesome way. Two general classifications may help in a study of the various types:—Idealistic Stories which are imaginary, but teach truths or principles, and Realistic Stories, which are true to fact, both of which have their recognized place in religious education.

The first group, Idealistic Stories, represents a type of story which must be tactfully and wisely handled in a Junior class, where it will be acceptable only on the ground of its being fiction, pure and simple. Under this head come myths and allegories, legends and fables. "Legends," says one authority, "have a considerable element of fact and form the natural link that joins fairy tale and myth with the historic stories." The classic myths and legends have made a strong appeal to the fancy of young people, and are valuable in so far as they teach the fundamental principles of conduct, but many of them have to be carefully revised in order to eliminate certain crudities and undesirable elements. Fables are equally appealing to the boys and girls of this age, but without this disadvantage. In them wrong is always punished, while virtue and truth

are rewarded. This utilitarian teaching is just what impresses most strongly the Junior's type of mind which is constantly asking, "Will it pay?"

Æsop is the old reliable source of fables, and for the other forms of idealistic stories we may go to—Bulfinch's "Age of Fable" and "Age of Chivalry"; Hawthorne's "Wonder Tales"; Kingsley's "Greek Heroes"; Brooks' "Story of King Arthur" and Sidney Lanier's "The Boy's King Arthur," or any of a host of others. Laura E. Richards has given us two books of allegorical tales for both old and young, which are said to be as near perfection as possible, in "The Golden Windows" and "The Silver Crown."

But of even greater charm for Juniors is the other group—the Realistic Story, which must reflect real life as well as illustrate a principle. The inspiring hero tales that fire the imagination of our boys and girls may be drawn from history, biography, the Bible or personal experience. There is absolutely no limit to the sources of this material and the teacher who is constantly on the lookout is sure to be rewarded. There are many excellent books to be had, but Plutarch's "Lives of Illustrious Men" is one of the oldest and best, while Charlotte Yonge's "Book of Golden Deeds" is worthy of mention.

Then, too, there are many splendid collections of stories of all types from which the teacher may select his material. One of the most helpful of

these is William Byron Forbush's "Manual of Stories," which contains a list of over six hundred stories arranged under different virtues. There is also "Some Great Stories and How to Tell Them" by Richard Wyche, President of the National Story-Tellers' League.

But the teacher who would have a fund of good stories at his finger-tips must be prepared to do some work. Not only should he be constantly seeking and filing away stories for future use, but also practising the art on every possible occasion, telling and retelling each story to himself until he can give it without hesitation or notes. For he cannot give what he has not already made his own, nor can he stir the imagination and kindle the fires of fancy in his hearers if he himself does not see the picture and feel the inspiration of it.

Perhaps some busy teachers will think that the effort and time spent on this work will not be justified by the returns. To all such, I can say without reservation—you will find it one of the most profitable and fascinating of studies, and, what is more vital, your power as a teacher will be increased a thousandfold.

XX

TELLING ORIGINAL STORIES

IF you have never done such a thing as tell a story which is the product of your own imagination, your first verdict will probably be that it is impossible. "Besides, what is the use of making up stories yourself, anyway," you will argue, "when there are so many perfectly splendid ready-made ones all neatly compiled in handy volumes for the teacher?"

True, there is no crying need for new stories, in these days of specialized helps and carefully graded collections of story material, but the teacher who makes the effort to compose original stories, however difficult it may be at first, is developing that wonderful power of the imagination which we call *visualizing,* and without which no story, either your own or somebody else's, can be made vital and inspiring. That you cannot make your hearers see a thing which you have not first seen for yourself, goes without saying, so that anything which increases this power should be welcomed by all who take story-telling seriously.

Then, too, the man or woman who knows how to proceed to frame any given material into a well-balanced story, need never be at a loss for an illustration at a moment's notice, for there is always the inexhaustible fund of one's experience to draw from. It is a great thing for any teacher, and

especially one dealing with Juniors, with whom the demand for stories that are *true* is so predominant, to be able to work up his own experiences or the daily happenings he hears of and reads about, into material suitable for class use.

Stories of brilliant heroes whose brave exploits have dazzled the world are all right in their place, but our boys and girls need to be shown the heroic in every-day life, the greatness of little deeds well done, and to be taught that the bravest acts are not all performed on the battlefield. Through the use of the material that comes to our hand every day, we can lead them to realize the importance of doing the little things of life as if they were great things, nobly, gladly and thoroughly, with the spirit of true service. And who will say that this is not real religious education?

Every time I pick up a newspaper, I read something that gives me the skeleton of a story illustrating some great principle of life, such as courage, self-sacrifice, bravery, generosity, endurance; often when I read a magazine or talk with a friend, I come across a splendid "hero story." There seems to be no end of good material, if we only keep our eyes open as we go, and learn to be collectors.

But it is unwise to trust to your memory for keeping them. Have some definite system of filing them away for future use, indexing or classifying them according to subjects. I have found a system

of envelopes and a card index the most satisfactory method. In the envelopes I file clippings of various sorts under headings, and on the cards I make a record of any good story I have found, noting the name of the book or magazine, the page and the theme of the story. When I hear a story that appeals to me for future use, I make an outline of it at once, filling it in at my earliest convenience and filing it away in one of the envelopes. Such a system requires very little time to keep up, and certainly saves a great deal of valuable time, and effort as well, when you want a particular story, or one on a certain theme.

But in telling original stories, we must remember that each one must be built up on certain principles, just as all the best stories we find in books or elsewhere are, though this may not be apparent to the casual observer. All good story-tellers, whose confidence and spontaneity we admire and envy, adhere to the rules of story-making and study their application in the best models, with the exception perhaps of the fortunate few whom we call "born story-tellers." The average person, however, can afford to spend a little time studying the construction and art of the story and any one who will do this conscientiously and practise persistently can learn to tell stories well. There are so many excellent books on the subject that no one need seek far for help, though one good one such as "Stories and Story-Telling" by Edward

Porter St. John, or "The Use of the Story in Religious Education" by Margaret W. Eggleston, covers the ground pretty thoroughly.

We all know, of course, that every story we tell must have four distinct divisions—a beginning or introduction, the succession of events or body of the story, a climax or moral issue of the story, and a conclusion, but do we not sometimes disregard these essential elements? If we do, we are at as much disadvantage as an unskilled workman who is given tools for a certain piece of work but has not learned how to use them. Any teacher who starts out to tell a tale, original or otherwise, without first having planned it carefully along these lines, is more than likely to fail to grip the hearers at the outset, to overload the narrative with unnecessary detail, to present a succession of events that is neither orderly nor complete, to miss the point in the climax and tack on a moral at the end, or as often happens, to wander on and on indefinitely not knowing when to stop.

Whereas the ability quickly to analyze a story into these essential elements can do more than keep the story-teller from falling into these snares. It enables him to decide whether a story is worth telling or not, it makes the story easier to remember, easier to condense if too long, or expand if too brief, and gives him a confidence at the outset that the best of stories prepared in a hit-and-miss way fails to inspire.

XXI

RETELLING FAMILIAR BIBLE STORIES

UNDOUBTEDLY the hardest sort of story to tell to Juniors is the familiar Bible story, for the simple reason that it has been heard so many times that the children know exactly what is coming, and the vital element of suspense is apt to be sadly lacking. It does not facilitate matters any to be told, with the brutal frankness of youth, as who has not been, to "Give us something new; we've heard that story a dozen times." The chances are that they have, and given in pretty much the same old way; so we really cannot blame the boys and girls if they appear indifferent and disinterested when the lesson consists of some familiar, oft-told tale.

Especially is this true of the stories of the Old Testament, for these are the ones which the average Junior has heard from infancy, stories of Abraham and Moses, of Joseph and Daniel, of Ruth and Gideon, and all the rest. If these are to be interesting, they must be presented in a fresh, original way that will pique curiosity and arouse interest. It is often wise to modernize the incident, picturing it in your mind as if it happened to-day, or to tell it without the use of names, concealing its source until the end, or as long as you

reasonably can. And it is surprising how easily this can be done without doing violence to the original or creating a wrong or different impression, if we will but take the trouble to put ourselves in the place of the hero or heroine and try to imagine how he or she must have felt under the circumstances and many less important things that probably happened, but are not related in the narrative. The teacher who can recreate a familiar story in this way, so that it lives anew under her touch, has discovered one of the greatest secrets of teaching.

But if we must expand where the original is terse and perhaps vague, there are also times when good judgment dictates a wise elimination. Many of the Old Testament stories contain moral lessons quite unsuited to Juniors, while in others the motive is too complex and mature to be comprehended by them. This does not mean that the stories need to be falsely told or given as half-truths, but rather that the emphasis be placed on the phases which can be made most helpful to child life. Positive stories of the "Thou shalt" type, that rouse in the child's mind a desire to be like the hero, are much more to be desired than the "Thou shalt not" type.

In the preparation of the familiar Bible story, we must not forget the four distinct parts which comprise all well-balanced stories, whether sacred or secular, but must put our material into definite

form for telling. The right sort of introduction is even more essential with the familiar tale than with a new one, for instead of letting the Juniors feel that they know what is coming, it should make them eager to know what we have to tell. The teacher who begins with "Well, to-day we are to learn more about Paul, though I am sure you thought last Sunday that you had heard all about him," is not likely to rouse much interest at the start or to hold the attention for long. Then the sequence of events which presents the movement of the story toward the climax must be orderly and complete, giving the necessary facts step by step, and preparing for the climax without giving it away.

In many instances this may require a little shifting of the story material from the way in which it is given in the original, especially in the case of stories from the New Testament, where various writers on the same subject or series of events record them in different order and emphasize points which particularly impressed them. Sometimes, too, as in the case of Peter and Paul, the events of their lives must be separated from other biographies and arranged in chronological order. This represents study, of course, for we often have to read the whole book to get what we want, and to gather the necessary setting and local colour, but the work will show in our story. As to the third division, the climax, no part of the narrative is

more vital, for it is here that the moral lesson must be enforced or conveyed, and *not at the end.* For that reason, failure here means total failure, whereas skill in dealing with it counts more for success than most of us dream. Then the conclusion must bring a sense of completeness which leaves the mind at rest, ready to turn back and think over the deeper meaning of the tale.

The hero stories of the New Testament are of greatest use in the Junior and Adolescent groups where interests centre in heroism, chivalry, self-sacrifice, service for others, and so on, with this noticeable distinction, that the Junior attaches all importance to the heroic deed, while the older boy probes deeper into the motives of the action and the inner meaning of the story. In all our stories we must emphasize the character that makes a man do certain things and make certain choices, and the results of these on future life, and in the lives of Peter and Paul and Stephen and the rest, we can find plenty of this heroic material which is just what we need.

But it is in our portrayal of Christ that we can picture the highest type of manhood and heroism of all history. If we can " Bring out the manhood of the Christ, the sympathy with those who suffered, the comradeship with those who worked, the love for His mother and His friends, His fearlessness, the inspiration of His life as He walked and talked with His disciples," we will succeed in mak-

ing Him live in the boys' and girls' minds and lives, not as a being apart and different, but as one who understands and sympathizes. Many a boy has been repelled by a picture of Jesus as an effeminate type of person going about in long, flowing white robes performing miracles and never making a mistake or doing a wrong deed. Can we not stress rather the strength and manliness of the boy whose school life was successful, whose home life was helpful and whose manhood was full of toil and trouble yet without conscious wrong?

One of the best ways of stimulating interest in the familiar Bible story is dramatization, which is coming to be recognized as a valuable aid in teaching, for once an incident has been acted in this way by the scholars, it is more deeply impressed than by any amount of mere telling. Any one who has hesitated over attempting this type of expressional work for lack of a knowledge of how to go about it should read " The Dramatization of Bible Stories " by Miller, or " The Good Samaritan and Other Bible Stories Dramatized " by Cole.

XXII

THE JUNIOR AS STORY-TELLER

IT had never occurred to me just how much could be gained by encouraging the Juniors themselves to be story-tellers, until I found myself at a loss to know what to do with a backward child. To all intents and purposes she paid attention, but with that listless air and intent gaze which usually means an unreceptive mind. Never could I get her to answer even the simplest questions, nor would she read when asked, which made her conspicuous, as the others were only too eager to show their prowess in this respect. She did not seem to be mentally deficient, but rather inarticulate and lacking in concentration. How she could be drawn out of her shell, and enabled to get as much from the lesson as the other scholars, was the problem presented to me.

One day I suggested to the class that any one who could tell another story about the Bible character we were studying for the day might volunteer to do so after the lesson. It was entirely voluntary, as I did not wish to make a task of what should be a privilege and a delight. The idea took well, and there were always one or two eager to tell a story, although time limited us to one. One day, to my great surprise, the backward

child offered very timidly to take part, and told a simple little story rather well, apparently enjoying the experience of being able to add her little bit to the class session. Having listened for several Sundays to the others, she had gained enough confidence to make the plunge herself.

As time went on, she took part frequently, until the story-telling had completely taken her out of herself, and transformed her into a more alert, wide-awake and responsive child, who was able also to reproduce any of the lesson stories that we had covered during the quarter. In every case she brought out the main teaching of the story, showing that she had grasped the heart of the teaching and applied it to her own life. It was interesting and significant to note the parts of a story that appealed to her most, for there was no attempt at mimicry, or a mere repetition of words, but a simple retelling in her own words, as it had impressed her. Each time her powers of expression seemed to improve, and in many other ways this reticent little girl seemed to "find herself" through the medium of the story.

All the scholars, in fact, took a new interest in the class, and responded wonderfully to this appeal of the story. I did not have them tell the story of the previous lesson each Sunday, as I found that a few pointed questions served the purpose of connecting the lessons and required much less time. Rather, I called for stories that would

illustrate the theme of the day's teaching, or some other phase of the life of the hero or heroine we were studying, and the Juniors never failed me. Even the most "wooden" of them seemed to come to life, as it were, when they saw that they had equal chances with the more brilliant ones, and the most self-conscious forgot their awkwardness and fear after one or two attempts.

We made it a rule never to interrupt the story-teller, even if some important details were left out, as this was sure to be disconcerting, but instead, some one else was permitted to give them at the close of the story. Of course, no one was allowed to laugh when a mistake was made or the speaker hesitated for the right word; every one tried to do as he would be done by when his turn came.

There are always one or two pupils who never seem anxious to tell a story, either because they are afraid of making mistakes or possibly because no particular story has appealed to them. For this sort of person, and in fact for the whole class, co-operative story-telling is helpful. We tried it with secular stories rather than Bible stories until the scholars were accustomed to it. I made an outline on the board of the chief events or stages of the tale, and then let the Juniors in turn fill in the details of each part, one after the other in quick succession, each one contributing his small share to the completed story. This is a splendid way of getting the diffident ones started, as the part each

one has to take is so definite and short that he is not apt to be so fearful as when asked to tell a story alone. In this way, too, he will gradually gain confidence.

"Story-telling has a real mission to perform in setting free the natural creative expression of children, and in vitalizing the general atmosphere of the school," says Sara Cone Bryant, in "How to Tell Stories to Children," and any one who has made use of this method knows how true that is. If the teacher, in telling a story, realizes that it is not necessary to bring the wording and style down to the plane of the children's intelligence, but rather to bring them up to a high standard of pure English, choice vocabulary and beautiful imagery, she can do much to develop their powers of expression and enrich their vocabulary. Dean Hodges' book "Bible Stories," for instance, illustrates perhaps more clearly than any other similar collection how successfully the fine phrasing of the Hebrews may be preserved, and how much more effective it is than our best paraphrasing of the original.

Then, too, it seems to me, the children should be given a chance to develop their imagination by inventing stories of their own to illustrate the thought of the lesson. One teacher tells of illustrating a lesson on courtesy by a story of a boy who helped an old lady because he had no mother of his own to help. The boys were to report the

following Sunday whether they had seen anybody help "Somebody's Mother" during the week. "One after another the original stories were told," says the teacher, "wonderful stories that showed how they had not only been looking for, but living the message of the story. But the one that stayed longest with me was this one from a shabby youngster, 'My sister is only five years old, and we have three babies, so her back aches sometimes. But when Mother tells her she can go and play after they are in bed, she runs right down the street to help another mother who hasn't any big girls.' I just watched her this week and—and—well, she's worth having."

XXIII

GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH THE BIBLE

HOW many people go through life without any real knowledge of the Bible, or ability to use it intelligently! Watch the average person endeavouring to locate a passage, and nine times out of ten he does not even know where to look for the particular Book he wants. On the other hand, I have seen Junior boys and girls who know the names of the sixty-six Books as they know a song, and can locate a Scripture passage more quickly than I myself can. Besides that, they can tell most of the outstanding stories of the Bible in their own words and know where many of the great memory gems are to be found.

The Bible means something more than a mere book to these boys and girls, for they have acquired a working knowledge of it that makes it seem a very dear friend. And best of all, nothing that they may ever do will be able to take that valuable possession from them, for what is learned at this age becomes part of the life, or, as G. Stanley Hall puts it, "Whatever is thoroughly implanted so that it has become automatic can never be entirely lost." For that reason we must admit how important it is that we should plan for our

Juniors to get acquainted with the Bible at this plastic stage in their development.

Up to the Junior grade the child has formed a very fragmentary and incomplete conception of the Bible, but now he is capable of grasping a more complete and connected knowledge of its progression and development. The various stories with which the boys and girls are already familiar will take on a new and vital interest when it is understood how they are connected and related in point of time and purpose, and when the unity and continuity of the whole is established. If we bear this in mind in our teaching, we will be kept from the mistake of giving our Juniors isolated and disconnected pictures of the Bible, and from turning out pupils who know no better than to look for the story of Jonah in the New Testament.

Of course they will continue to interpret the Bible in terms of great personalities because as we have seen, the power of the story still grips them. But it is not enough for them to be able to tell these stories, for they should know where to find them at a minute's notice, and to give the historical and geographical background of each. An excellent help along these lines is the making of picture lives. Suggest that each pupil choose a particular Bible character for study and have him make a book about that person, using everything he can obtain in the line of pictures or written matter descriptive of the hero's or heroine's life and work.

In this book (an exercise or work book) he may put clipped pictures, the Brown or Perry prints, original drawings and decorations, or he may write verses of Scripture that apply to the character chosen, and draw maps to show the country or any items of interest. This work requires original research which is excellent training for Juniors, and is, fortunately, a welcome task.

If your pupils have not learned the names of the books of the Bible, that should be your first move in getting them acquainted with it, for they can never really feel at home with it and use it freely until they have mastered this preliminary. As a rule it is not such a formidable study as might be imagined, for the Junior glories in overcoming difficulties of this sort and in memorizing facts and figures which seem difficult to adults. My own experience has been that they learn about twice as many names as the number assigned each week, so eager are they to excel one another and win out first. Then when they discover that this gives them a key to the use of the Bible itself, so that they can find any Book they want by saying over the list until they come to the desired name, their delight and satisfaction are really gratifying.

That is the time when Bible drill may be used with profit and enjoyment, and once the pupils have become accustomed to it, they will look forward to it eagerly. There are different ways of conducting this part of the service, so that it is

easy to vary the drill to avoid monotony. The pupils may be asked to locate in their Bibles certain passages of Scripture, the incentive being that the pupil finding it first has the privilege of reading it aloud to the class. Again, the teacher may announce the location of a certain verse in the Bible, and ask every one who can repeat that verse to stand while he or she counts twenty; then a pupil is chosen at random to recite it.

Not a great deal of time is required for this drill, and it can be worked in after the lesson for a few minutes each Sunday, if it is planned for. One great advantage is that it gives the boys and girls a definite use for their individual Bibles, which they might otherwise neglect to bring with them, and which is so important because it is largely in Sunday school that they are used. When this habit has been acquired, it is not too much to expect the habit of daily Bible reading to grow out of it, abetted by the Junior's great delight in reading, and fostered by the tactful coöperation of those in the home. And, at this habit-forming period, what more worth while could a teacher strive for than the habit of daily use of God's Word?

XXIV

THE MEMORY WORK—WHY? WHAT? HOW?

WHY bother getting Junior boys and girls to do memorizing? you ask. In answer let me invite you to look into your own life and see if the greater part of your Bible knowledge, and a great deal of other kinds as well, is not what you learned at the ages of nine, ten, eleven and twelve. I have proved this repeatedly, until it has become easy to believe the statement of educationalists that at no other period of life is the mind so plastic and retentive as in the Junior years. There seems to be little limit to the capacity of some boys' and girls' minds and to the rapidity with which they learn. That in itself is sufficient reason for keeping the youthful mind actively employed with wholesome thoughts, for it is constantly storing up material of one kind or another. Think of the treasures that we can bring to these young lives,—the best of the world's literature and God's Word—that will enrich the heart-life through all the coming years and provide many a safeguard against future temptations.

What shall we give these eager young learners? Shall we hand them an open Bible and allow them to proceed at random? Just as we have carefully selected memory work for the Beginners and Primary scholars most suited to their needs, so we choose for these rapidly developing, active Juniors

what we find to be best adapted to their enlarged outlook on life as well as their future requirements.

In the first place, they are learning to use their own Bibles, which necessitates a knowledge of the names of the Books of the Bible, together with a few important facts about the great Book. The Junior's marvelous capacity for detail makes it an easy task for him to master this, as well as certain Oriental manners and customs and Bible geography which he has not been ready for up to this time. The fact that the majority of men and women to-day were not given this very necessary groundwork at the crucial period in their lives, accounts for the appalling ignorance of Biblical facts manifested in our Young People's Societies and Adult Bible Classes.

Of course, the teacher is expected to take up the weekly memory text, as well as the great hymns of the Church and the memory work outlined in the Quarterly, but in addition to this, a definite schedule of memorizing for each year of the Junior course should be carefully mapped out and systematically followed. For instance, the programme for the first year should include a few hymns of the Church, the names of the Disciples and the Books of the Bible, together with a few simple and direct passages of Scripture such as—The Boy Jesus—Luke 2: 40–52; Jesus Stilling the Storm—Mark 4: 35–41; Jesus the Good Shepherd—John 10: 11–16; The King of Glory—Psalm 24: 1–10.

In the second and third years, several of the Parables might be learned, as well as the Beatitudes, the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, and such selections as—The First Easter Morning—Mark 16: 1–7; The Christ Child—Matt. 2: 1–15; The Great Commission—Matt. 28: 16–20; The Greatest Thing in the World—1 Corinthians 13: 1–13; The Law of the Lord—Psalm 19: 7–14.

That is all very well, you say, but *How* is it to be done? Will the boys and girls take an interest in this work and really try to master it? Of course they will, if you make it seem worth while to them. I have never known a case of failure where the teacher went about it the right way.

The one great difficulty seems to be time. We will simply have to come to it—to give the Juniors either a longer lesson period, or a special allotment for this valuable type of work. Not only do they need it, but they love it, and we spend a great deal of time in exercises of much less worth. When we assign a certain passage to be memorized we must take time to explain and relate it to the Junior's experience. Later we must drill them in it again and again until it has become a part of them, and continue to use the various passages frequently. So we find that *drill* is the *How* of memorization for Juniors, whether it be learning to name and find the different books of the Bible, to love the great Church hymns, or to know the finest passages of Scripture.

XXV

THE USE OF PICTURES

WHILE all teachers readily concede the importance of pictures in the Beginners and Primary Departments, there seem to be many who conclude that they have no place among Juniors. Although they must be used here with the utmost discretion and chosen with the greatest care, still there is a wealth of valuable picture material which the teacher of Juniors will find most helpful and easily acquired, into the bargain. In fact, one cannot afford to do without some sort of pictures, not only to awaken interest and hold attention, but to explain the life and customs of Bible times, which cannot very readily be imagined by the boys and girls.

Almost every lesson has some feature which can be illustrated by an appropriate picture or two, or the geographical setting made clearer by scenes from Oriental life and lands. Such pictures may be found in travel books and magazines, and the teacher who is on the alert will soon have a splendid assortment. Sometimes a series of small scenes clipped and mounted on a card is useful in the class, and may be handed around for individual inspection. Copies of all the great works of art

can now be obtained in various sizes, for a small sum, from such firms as The Perry Pictures Company, Malden, Massachusetts, and The Brown Picture Company, Beverly, Massachusetts, the penny pictures being admirable for class use. If you have a catalogue of the material carried, you can readily select any Biblical scene you wish. I have found a small set of the Tissot paintings excellent for illustrating the lessons.

For missionary education there is nothing more helpful than pictures. Juniors are invariably interested in something which shows exactly what unfamiliar things and people look like. The teacher can provide much suitable illustrative material for missionary talks by clipping from the newspapers and magazines, and encouraging the scholars to do the same.

The pictures which hang on the walls in the Junior Department have a far greater influence on the boys and girls than most of us realize, and are a means of providing the right or wrong sort of ideals. They should be carefully chosen " with a view to their fitness for the room, adaptation to the age of the scholars, and their unconscious educational value." Many of the masterpieces of art which should find their places in the Beginners and Primary Departments are quite unsuitable in a class of Juniors. When the Junior boys and girls must occupy a part of the room where younger children also gather, try to have them in

a corner, so that the things they need and the pictures they can enjoy may be placed near them.

In securing pictures for the walls of the Junior class, it is a good plan to have the frames made with removable backs, so that the pictures may be changed according to the season or the line of thought being followed in the lessons. For instance, at Christmas time a group might be chosen from the following: Sistine Madonna, by Raphael; The Announcement to the Shepherds and the Flight Into Egypt, both by Plockhorst; The Star in the East, by Doré; The Holy Family, by Murillo; The Adoration of the Shepherds, by Correggio. At Easter pictures may be chosen from a great variety of sacred subjects; during a study of the life of Christ, from: Christ Among the Doctors, Christ and the Rich Young Ruler, and Christ Preaching from a Boat, all by Hoffman; The Light of the World, by Holman Hunt; The Good Shepherd, by Plockhorst, and The Last Supper, by Leonardo da Vinci.

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Among what we might call the hero pictures there are many which will make a strong appeal to Juniors. There is Raphael's head of Paul; Michelangelo's sculptured head of David; John the Baptist; Daniel in the Lion's Den; Michelangelo's Moses; Saint George and the Dragon; Sir Galahad, and many others, which can be procured in large size for the walls, or smaller for class use. One teacher gave each member of his class of

boys a penny-size hero picture on each special day in the year. Soon they had a collection of famous pictures which all recalled Bible stories and lessons taught in Sunday school, and almost every boy framed his for his own room at home.

So in many ways pictures can be made not only an aid in teaching our Junior boys and girls, but a real factor in shaping their characters and moulding their young lives, for in the words of Dr. Hervey in his helpful little book " Picture-Work," a picture " helps us to see more clearly, feel more heartily, and act upon more faithfully the truth which is not or cannot be immediately present to our senses. The truth to be pictured may be the truth of people, places and actions—external things; it may be the truth of character and of inner life—the things that are unseen, which we could never see at all except by the aid of real things or pictures of real things; just as, for example, our idea of God is built out of our experience of mountains, flowers, thunder-storms, our mother's tenderness, and our father's strength."

XXVI

UTILIZING THE COLLECTIVE INSTINCT

HAVE you ever taken the trouble to observe the contents of a boy's pocket, or the collections of miscellaneous material found in his room? If you have not, you will be astonished to find them of considerable interest as well as of genuine significance. At first sight it would seem that nothing could be learned from such a mass of unrelated objects, without form, figure or purpose, as most of them seem to be nails, screws, pencil stubs, parts of mechanical toys, alarm clocks and other contrivances hard to describe. Most of the things that boys treasure in this way are of no real value and are put to no practical use by them, not even to the extent of supplying pleasure by being examined. They are simply collected and kept, despite the efforts of parents to induce their offspring to dispose of this "stuff" or "junk," as it is unappreciatively termed in adult circles.

We are beginning to realize now that this instinct to collect and to hoard is of very ancient origin, being at the very foundation of civilization. Primitive man did not make much advance toward civilization until he began to amass prop-

erty; at first only very crude articles, but gradually collecting and storing up objects of various kinds that would add to his comfort and pleasure, until to-day man is the greatest hoarder of the universe, not excepting the animals which in time of plenty store up for the time of need to come. So the Junior, in whom the habit of accumulating is developing at an alarming speed, exhibits a perfectly normal instinct.

But what use can the teacher make of this passion—has it any educational value? Like every other interest of child life, it suggests a point of contact as well as an opportunity that the wide-awake teacher will not overlook.

The boy or girl who can be shown how to make an interesting and valuable collection out of an unorganized jumble of objects may be taught a life lesson of system, orderliness and care, as well as a broader interest in the things about him. There are so many fascinating things that a Junior may collect which will be a liberal education for him, and in which members of a class as well as the teacher may coöperate, that there is ample scope for variety and personal preference. Where boys are interested in stamp collecting, or coins, for instance, an exchange can be carried on by the class at their mid-week gathering, and the teacher can help by supplying the new varieties and identifying unknown ones. A great deal of information can be worked into this pastime, and vital

interest aroused in Biblical and other lands through the medium of the postage stamp and the coin.

The making of a really worth-while collection is good mental discipline for any boy or girl; it trains them to think for themselves. It is interesting to note, along this line, that most of the men who have achieved greatness have had some such hobby in their youth. The late Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone, said shortly before he passed away: "My father had a wonderful influence in my life. He encouraged us to do things which trained us to think for ourselves. I made collections of botanical specimens, of the skeletons of birds and small animals, which I cleaned myself. In that way I learned a great deal about anatomy." It is also a fact that boys who become interested in birds, butterflies and animals from a scientific point of view through their collections, are less liable to be wantonly destructive of all such life.

A vital interest in nature is aroused in the heart of the young collector and this may be developed through walks and hikes in search of specimens. On such outings, the teacher will probably find that he or she has much to learn, too, not the least being what the scholars are interested in, and how these interests may be appealed to. For the benefit of all who will want to take advantage of this point of contact, I will give a list of some of the most common collections made by Juniors, to-

gether with the number of specimens considered by the Trail Rangers to be a fair test of the value of the collections. This is a reasonable standard for boys up to fourteen years of age, and any Trail Ranger who has two collections numbering the totals given in this list is entitled to a collector's badge. All collections must be neatly arranged, mounted and properly numbered.

Collection	*Number of Specimens*
Native woods, showing mature bark	20
Noxious weeds or weed seeds	20
Insects, injurious and beneficial	30
Work of insects and plant diseases	15
Leaves of Canadian trees	30
Wild flowers and ferns	30
Grains, clovers, grasses and forage plants, of each	6
Shells, land, fresh and salt water	50
Minerals, native Canadian	20
Processes of manufactures (showing stages)	10
Military buttons and badges	75
War trophies	20
Prize ribbons and tickets	20
Flags of all nations	20
Coins and medals	100
Postage stamps, varieties	500

The collecting instinct may also be put to direct use in the Sunday school in securing things which will add to the interest and impressiveness of the teaching. Boys and girls love to collect pictures

for illustrative work, and all sorts of material that will make the details of Biblical life and times more vivid and realistic. A missionary cabinet is an excellent thing to have, for the scholars will be able to provide many pictures and curios that will be of value along this line, and should be constantly on the lookout for something suitable.

One of the greatest incentives in all work with Juniors, as we have already seen, is competition, which always lends zest and interest to whatever they undertake. The desire to excel is very strong in the heart of the child at this period, and if this element is introduced in a friendly way, the interest will never flag. Through this they may also learn many valuable lessons of team-play and good sportsmanship which will develop character.

XXVII

MID-WEEK ACTIVITIES

THE teacher who undertakes to utilize this collective instinct which we have been considering, will very soon find that some regular time must be set apart for mid-week activities of these and other sorts. For the contact on Sunday unfortunately gives the teacher very little chance to really know his Juniors, to understand their play-life, to appreciate their varied interests and their hobbies, as he should in order to be able to meet the demands of their rapidly developing instincts. Meeting one's class through the week does more even than bring about this sympathetic understanding which increases the teacher's influence over the Junior boys or girls,—it affords opportunities for the development of the physical, mental and social sides of their nature, which the Sunday-school session cannot provide.

I would go farther and say that these activities make it possible for the Church to hold scholars who have no Christian influences at home, and for the teacher to get in touch with such homes. Then, too, they embody in every-day life the principles for which the Sunday school stands by showing the children how the religion taught there may be connected with their daily lives. But most vital of

all, perhaps, they give our Juniors an opportunity to be "Doers of the Word" by giving practical expression to the unselfish thoughts and desires aroused by our teaching, for "All truth dies out in the mind, unless it is lived out in practice." The Junior is so much more a doer than a thinker, that it is natural for him to desire to express what he has learned, in deeds of usefulness and service.

Experience has shown that by far the best results are obtained when these activities are carried on by an organized group or club composed of the members of the Junior Department or class, for as we have already seen, Juniors love to belong to something, to have secret passwords and mottoes and wear a class pin or emblem of some sort. Such organizations should be very simple, having but three officers—president, secretary and treasurer, who may assist the teacher in many ways, and should be formed of small groups, boys and girls separately. The main object, however, is to have a fascinating purpose or aim, and keep it always in view until the job is finished. Better have no organization at all than one that has lost spirit and interest. The work chosen must be something very worth-while, and if it fails to challenge the young workers, something more appropriate should at once be undertaken, for there are plenty of things which will hold their interest if the teacher does his or her part in maintaining it.

Activities for Juniors naturally divide them-

selves into two main classes—on the one hand, those that represent self-enjoyment and self-improvement, and on the other, what we call service activities. In the first group there are the purely *social* gatherings, best of which take place at the teacher's home, where a delightful intimacy may be established around the fire, over the cocoa-cups or about the piano. These may be delightfully combined with *physical* activities, such as hikes, skating parties, picnics, and the like, which may in turn be interwoven with the *mental* or educational interests, in nature study hikes, bird walks, and outings in search of various specimens for the many possible collections previously referred to. In the making of any of these collections, the teacher will probably find that he, too, has much to learn, and will gladly take advantage of the splendid help given by such books as " Birds Every Child Should Know," " Wild Flowers Every Child Should Know," and others in the same series which is a most valuable one indeed, both for the teacher and parent.

A young man of my acquaintance introduced a popular idea when he took his class of boys in a large city to see some process of manufacture each week, and encouraged them to collect examples of the various stages so that they could give an intelligent account of each industry. Another teacher, realizing that her girls were becoming voracious readers, formed a reading club, in order

that she might be able to influence their literary tastes, and bring them into contact with the right sort of ideals. At each meeting, the books read through the week were discussed and new titles recommended.

When it comes to service activities, there is not quite such a wide scope perhaps, but every community has some real need that Junior boys and girls can fill if the field is carefully looked into. Almost any class of Juniors could undertake to make scrap-books of different kinds to take to orphanages or hospitals, or to send to foreign mission stations, and the cutting and pasting could be done at a mid-week gathering. Where there is an aged people's home, reading matter is always appreciated, such as recent magazines and interesting papers. Then, too, Juniors love to sing for shut-ins or even dramatize a story that they know well.

At the Christmas season they should be shown how to make simple gifts for their parents or friends, not the least part of the fun being the delightful mystery of these secrets planned and executed at the teacher's home. Making posters for use in the class is a fascinating pastime for mid-week gatherings, and a splendid handwork exercise, as will be described presently. Missionary charts, temperance charts, charts for Easter, Mothers' Day and any other special occasion, may be made from time to time.

Raising money for some missionary enterprise, a fresh air or Santa Claus fund helps our boys and girls to realize what real sacrifice means and develops an unselfish interest in those less fortunate than themselves. Boys who are learning to make simple articles with tools can construct many suitable things for sale, while girls can make candy and do plain needlework or knitting. One class of energetic boys raised and sold vegetables successfully, while another opened a toy repair shop in a shed and earned quite a neat little sum by mending broken toys which were brought to them, and selling some which were donated by their friends.

Rendering service when no payment is expected is excellent training for Juniors, who are naturally inclined to be rather mercenary. There is always some one who has a need that your class could fill just for the pure love of helping somebody—old folks who would appreciate having their snow shovelled or their lawns cut regularly, or having errands run, and busy mothers with children to be minded or taken for walks. The alert Junior will find many such, willing and eager to accept his services, if he offers them in the right spirit.

Some schools give the Junior boys and girls work to do in connection with the Cradle Roll, acting as messengers, scouts for new members and bringing the tiny tots to service when they are old enough. Where this plan has been tried, not only has the Cradle Roll thrived, but the Juniors have

had splendid training in service and the satisfaction of knowing that they were helping along the work of the Sunday school in a worth-while way. For even Junior boys and girls will not be satisfied with work which does not amount to much, and which is not real service.

In all our mid-week activities, we must guard against taking the boys and girls out of the home too much, especially for evening meetings. The inevitable break with the home comes soon enough, in the Adolescent period, and parents are loath to hasten this time. The wise leader of Juniors will endeavour to coöperate with the home in postponing as long as possible this severance of interests from the ties of home life.

XXVIII

MAKING MISSIONS INTERESTING

THE point of contact with regard to Juniors and missions seems to me to be so obvious that if we give the matter any consideration whatever, we cannot fail to find the key to their keen interest and practical sympathy. It seems to be twofold, embracing the dual appeal to the capacity for hero worship and the interest in other child-life.

In other words, if we let the child's natural interests be our guide in the teaching of missions, as we do in other things, we will make the most of all the wonderful hero-stories of missionary enterprise, as well as of the appeal that childhood in other lands invariably makes. If ever we needed to shun the abstract and specialize in the concrete, it is here, for only as we succeed in doing this, can we hope to make any missionary impression on our boys and girls. And as a matter of fact, in no branch of our work is it easier to be concrete, for there is a wealth of story material of the vital sort that we need, to be had on all sides, if we only take the trouble to find and use it. Time was when the teacher had to dig and delve to secure good missionary stories, but now they are available in so many splendid collections,

prepared and issued in graded form by the various publishing houses, that there is no excuse for even the busiest of us running short of ammunition for our missionary guns.

A practical and simple method of putting this material within the reach of every teacher in your school, is to install a Missionary Library, with some enthusiastic person in charge, who will keep the books in constant circulation among the teachers. Some of the best works recommended for this purpose are: "The Missionary Education of Juniors," by Hutton, "Missionary Program Material for Teachers of Children Under Twelve," by Ferris, "Graded Missionary Instruction in the Sunday School," by Beard, "Why and How of Missions in the Sunday School," by Brown, "Home Life in All Lands," by Morris, "When I Was a Boy in Japan," by S. Shioya, "When I Was a Boy in China," by Yan Phou Lee, "The Chinese Boy and Girl," by Headland, "Talks on the Maple Leaf in Many Lands," by Mary I. Honston, "Canadian Heroes of Mission Fields Overseas," by Archer Wallace, and others issued by the denominational boards. The Missionary Library, or any individual teacher, might do well to subscribe to the monthly magazine *Everyland* (published at 160 Fifth Avenue, New York) which contains excellent pictures of children in other lands and missionary stories.

Granted then, that this material is plentiful—

how can we make the best use of it? Where the regular lessons on missions are observed as outlined in the graded courses for Juniors, the whole service for that particular Sunday should be missionary in character and spirit. Or such a service might well be used at least once a month, and be linked with the memory work.

For instance, instead of the usual opening songs, why not vary the order of worship by a special missionary service? Some of the great missionary passages of Scripture may be introduced in the form of responses, such as the following:

Superintendent—Where did Jesus command His followers to go?

All repeat—Mark 16: 15.

Superintendent—Whom did Jesus say we should love?

All—Matthew 22: 37–39.

Superintendent—How may we be doers of the Word?

All—Matthew 5: 16.

Superintendent—Unto whom may we be witnesses for Jesus?

All—Acts 22: 15.

Superintendent—How may we show that we love God?

All—John 13: 35.

Superintendent—How should we give to missionary work?

All—Matthew 10: 8b.

Superintendent—What shall fill the earth?

All—Habakkuk 2: 14.

Superintendent—Repeat the Great Love Verse.

All—John 3: 16.

After this memory drill, a gripping story of heroism in the mission field or of child life in some far-off land can be used to better advantage than any other medium to impress the great, crying need of the heathen world and the wonderful workings of the Gospel there. This appeal to the child's imagination is the most effective means of stirring his emotions and arousing his sympathies in the direction we wish.

The best way I know of to create missionary interest that will be practical and lasting, is to give the Juniors some real missionary work to do, such as educating a boy in one of the foreign mission fields of the Church. Any average class of bright boys can earn the money themselves, as the amount is not great, and the undertaking will give them a pleasing sense of personal responsibility and interest that nothing else could. If you can picture to them the striking contrast between a boy left in the ignorance and superstition of a heathen land and a boy educated and uplifted by Christianity, and then make them realize that it is within their power to save one such boy from a degraded life and make him a great power for good in the community, they will beg for the chance to help. Similarly, a class of girls may

undertake the education of a little girl in China or Japan, or support a cot in a mission hospital.

The boys or girls will then be eager for all the information they can get their hands on about their "adopted" child, what he is studying at the mission school, his habits and customs, the games he plays, the sort of country he lives in and anything that may differ from their own lives. In this way they will devour every interesting item of missionary news, will fairly clamour for maps, pictures of foreign buildings, people, animals and the like, and rejoice over any curios such as picture post-cards, stamps, coins, flags, footwear, articles of clothing and so on, from the far-off land. A curio collection is a sure key to a boy's heart, and if he is encouraged to add to it, so much the better. When it becomes known that your class has a Curio Cabinet, many families may be glad to contribute to it, and the teacher who keeps his eyes open can secure much that will interest his scholars from week to week.

XXIX

MISSIONARY HANDWORK

IT is difficult for one to say anything on the subject of handwork for Juniors without taking a little time to emphasize its importance and great value in religious education, and to urge every teacher to make more use of it in his or her class. Did you ever notice how much easier it is for a boy or girl of Junior age to *do* something than it is just to sit still and listen? Watch them at play and you will see that they are forever making something with their hands, not so much for the sake of the finished article as for the sheer enjoyment of the doing.

This desire to use the fingers is peculiar to the child at this period of his development and is what makes him so adept at various kinds of manual work. Our day schools have introduced this type of work with wonderful success, and there is no good reason why the Sunday schools should not increase their efficiency and double their attractiveness in dealing with Junior boys and girls by so doing.

In no branch of the work will the teacher find handwork a greater help than in missionary instruction, which to most of us is a constant prob-

lem. The task of making vital and fascinating to the growing boy and girl the life and needs of far-away countries and strange peoples is not an easy one, but with the aid of handwork it is changed from a tiresome duty into an instructive enjoyment. Until we can make our scholars feel the reality and the interest of the work our missionaries are doing and visualize it before their eyes, we cannot expect to arouse their interest or stir their emotions into active missionary endeavour. Mere words are very colourless to Juniors, and make little impression, but the brain pictures which are formed while the hands are at work are real and vivid, and far more lasting.

The most simple type of handwork, and one in which any class can engage, no matter what its limitations may be, is the making of missionary scrap-books. This can be done at home and a period of the session devoted to discussion and criticism. The scholars collect pictures of the particular country being studied from all available sources, and compile them, together with any interesting information they can obtain, in note-books of their own choosing. Or they may decide to make a Picture Life of some missionary, such as Livingstone, for example, when they will put in the book the story of his life written in their own words and illustrated with maps and any pictures of life in Africa. This work is always a delight to Juniors and needs only a little encour-

agement and occasional advice on the part of the teacher.

A little more effort is required to have a Curio Collection, but it is well worth it. If a cabinet is provided and a few interesting articles procured as a nucleus, it will not be long before you will have a splendid assortment which will supply many an object lesson for a little missionary talk, and which will keep the youngsters constantly on the lookout for material. The next step of course is the making of models for the collection, out of paper, raffia, wood, plasticine and clay, which will impress on the minds of the young makers all the interesting details of the life of the land they are studying. These will represent the type of homes, the sort of furniture used in them, the modes of living and other forms of local colour which lend life and reality to the study.

Then, if space permits, you can allow the children to actually construct a scene in the life of a boy or girl of the country they are learning to know. If you have a wall blackboard, it will provide the background of the picture, while a shelf attached in front of it will be for the arrangement of the scene, but where this cannot be done, a table is all that is needed. As you tell the story, or better still, as one of them tells it, let them arrange the articles as they would be grouped in real life, illustrating its different phases. Excellent sets of this sort can be obtained all ready for class use,

with stories describing the various objects. There is a Japanese garden, an African village, an Indian camp, and each one contains models of the objects which would comprise such a scene. They are called Missionary Object Lessons and may be obtained from the denominational publishing houses at about two dollars each.

The Juniors might copy these models in construction paper or in wood, or construct other objects to add to the scene. In "Handwork in Religious Education," by Addie Grace Wardle, a most helpful and practical little book, there are pictures which show quite a variety of models of this sort which may be made by Juniors, and also pulp maps and clay-modeling which are described in detail. There is really no limit to the variety which this work affords, but it of course requires a little study and planning beforehand.

The one thing which must be guarded against in carrying on handwork among Juniors is having it so well prepared that the scholar merely falls in line and does no original work of his own planning. The Junior likes to work out his own schemes and ideas, and will eagerly do this if he is guided in the right direction.

XXX

POSTER-MAKING

OF all the various forms of hand-work possible with Juniors, I do not believe there is any more easily carried out, as well as more certain of appeal, than poster-making. I happened upon it several years ago when racking my brain for something a little different with which to interest a particularly difficult class, and I have never tried anything that has met with such immediate and unqualified success as did this simple experiment in handwork. I had always entertained the idea, as many another teacher does still, I suppose, that handwork was not for the inexperienced nor those without artistic training, and that even if one did make a brave attempt at it, the biggest problem of all would be how to get the children to do it. But I am glad to say that it did not take me long to form a very different opinion of the whole matter.

As a matter of fact, the difficulties simply disappeared into thin air, for I soon became so absorbed in the poster-making that I forgot my lack of artistic skill, and what was better still, the Juniors thought my posters so wonderful that nothing would do but they must try and equal them. Although I could not draw much, I could at least use a ruler and crayons neatly, handle a

pair of scissors deftly and have never outgrown a childhood love of making scrap-books. Perhaps if I had been more of an artist, my work might have been too perfect and have discouraged the youngsters, but there was nothing about it which they could not duplicate with care and patience, and I am sure this fact appealed to them at the very start.

The first Sunday I introduced the subject by telling the class that, because they had been so faithful with their memory work for the past Quarter, we were going to have something new and interesting to help us with the lessons of the coming Quarter, and that every one who wanted to, might take a part in it. Then, in order to give the scholars a definite idea of what I had in mind, I showed a poster which I had prepared to illustrate the thought of the lesson, realizing that it is a mistake to ask boys and girls to do anything which you have not first done yourself. No amount of explanation can clarify an idea half so well as a concrete example of what is expected, and the teacher who has worked out the idea herself is in a better position to give suggestions, help those in difficulty and encourage the workers at the right time. Added to this is the unquestionable incentive given to the work by the very fact that the teacher considered it worth her while to give time and thought to its execution.

For the posters themselves I bought large sheets of white cardboard, which I cut into suitable sizes for class use (about 14 x 20 inches). Any plain

pasteboard, or even manila paper, would do as well. My equipment consisted of a tube of library paste, a box of crayons, a small box of paints with the three primary colours only, red and blue marking pencils, a pair of sharp scissors with fine points, and catalogues of the following firms which supply cheap copies of the masterpieces of art: Perry Picture Co., Malden, Mass.; G. P. Brown & Co., Beverly, Mass.; Wilde's Bible Pictures, W. A. Wilde Co., Boston, Mass. It was not often necessary to buy pictures for the posters, as I clipped a splendid assortment from magazines, Sunday-school papers, missionary leaflets and the like, but it was a great help to be able to obtain any special picture that I wanted at any time by referring to these useful and attractive catalogues.

In making the posters I had no guide—I just decided on the verse or phrase of the lesson I wished to emphasize and then selected suitable pictures to illustrate it, arranged them artistically on the card and did whatever decorating or lettering seemed necessary. No two were alike, for sometimes I illustrated the Golden Text, sometimes a key verse from the lesson text; often I aimed to amplify and explain the truth taught, always bearing in mind that the poster must be an expression of the heart of the lesson and not just something to divert attention. When it seemed advisable, I pinned a piece of paper over part of the poster so that some phase of it might come as a surprise during the teaching, as I used it to hold attention and illustrate as I went along. The general effect

of each poster was very pleasing, and there was certainly no doubt about the appeal.

Without any urging on my part, the Juniors set to work to make posters illustrating the past lesson, and brought them the following Sunday, when they formed the basis for a short review of the previous topic. There was plenty of variety and the standard of the work was surprisingly high, not a little ingenuity and originality being displayed in the youthful efforts. Soon they were making posters illustrating the lives of Bible heroes, the children of other lands, the enterprises of our missionaries and the customs of foreign peoples, temperance charts showing the progress of prohibition, and posters for special occasions such as Easter, Christmas, Mothers' Day.

Sometimes we made a coöperative poster, to which each member of the class contributed suitable pictures, as on the occasion of a Temperance or Missionary lesson. In this event, the work was done right in the class after the lesson, by the scholars, and the finished work found a place on the walls of the classroom, where it was viewed with pride and keenest interest from week to week. But as a rule, the Juniors were given perfect freedom of choice of subjects, suggestions only being made and advice and assistance granted whenever they were needed. In this way, I believe one of the most important missions of handwork is fulfilled as it is not when the activity is definitely dictated—the expression and development of the creative, constructive instinct.

XXXI

OTHER FORMS OF HANDWORK

ONCE the Juniors have been introduced to the realm of handwork through the medium of poster-making, which is one of the simplest and yet one of the most effective forms of expressional activities for scholars of this age, they may be led on to more advanced work, always being left free, however, to choose what form this will take, in order that the really constructive and creative instincts may have full scope for expression and development. For instance, I have always found it easier to interest boys and girls in the early stages of this period, in the purely pictorial work such as the posters present, than in handwork that entails much writing; whereas a little later they will usually relish the written exercise, provided, of course, that it is not imposed as a task.

But it does seem to me very necessary to the success of any sort of handwork, that it be presented as a really worth-while undertaking, and a certain standard of neatness, accuracy and artistic effect set. Otherwise it will not challenge the Junior, nor will it be the same force in his character development. Littlefield says in his "Handwork in the Sunday School," "As a scholar gives

of himself to his tasks, constantly and unconsciously faculties and character are being moulded by the principles underlying his work. Habits of order, regularity, concentration, obedience and besides all this, love of study, are engendered by summoning the pupil to a definite and attractive task." Except in one or two isolated cases, I have never been disappointed in the response made by Juniors to handwork, when it was enthusiastically introduced, and when they were given to understand that really good work was expected of them. In fact I have often been amazed at the way they have taken hold and at the originality with which they developed my suggestions.

Have you ever tried having your class illustrate their memory work? I know of no better way of linking handwork with the regular class activities, for the creative work is provided at the same time as the memory work is being mastered in a most fascinating manner. The Shepherd Psalm is a fine one to start with, for almost every phrase paints a picture, while other suitable ones for later use are the first, eighth, forty-sixth, sixty-eighth. A little home-made book containing pictures neatly pasted in, with the words of the text neatly copied and the pages decorated with fancy initial letters or borders, for the child is beginning to appreciate spacing and proportion and will enjoy doing these, makes a possession which a boy or girl will prize now and treasure for years to come. Other pas-

sages of Scripture, such as the Beatitudes, can be much more easily understood after they have been illustrated by the scholar, in whose mind they will represent something more than mere words.

A favourite undertaking with Juniors is the illustrating of hymns, which not only aids in the memorizing, but lends a real appreciation of their meaning. For this purpose there is none better than the old missionary song, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains" for it is full of pictorial effects, while the newer missionary hymn, "Fling Out the Banner" is a close second. Others that lend themselves well to this form of work are: "Once in David's Royal City," "The Spacious Firmament on High," "For the Beauty of the Earth," "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come," "Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me," "Onward, Christian Soldiers" and similar hymns expressive of human interest and an appreciation of the wonders of God's handiwork.

When our Juniors reach the stage where they can express themselves fairly well in writing, they delight in written work which calls for a more sustained effort, such as making note-books on the lessons, or life stories of Bible heroes written in their own words and illustrated with pictures, drawings and decorations. For the latter, each child chooses the character about whom he wishes to write, and sets down the life story in book form, using his own originality in the make-up and

illustrations, which gives him plenty of scope for variety and individuality. The little book may have a title-page, frontispiece, table of contents and ornamented stiff covers, which will make it a real work of art. I have seen beautiful "Lives" done in this way by Juniors, of Christ, Paul, Daniel, Ruth, Miriam, Joseph, David and other Bible characters, as well as missionary heroes. An exhibition of handwork at the end of the quarter, to which the parents are invited, is a great source of satisfaction to both teacher and scholars.

Of course the work will not be perfect, nor will the teacher be discouraged if the first attempts are somewhat crude and amateurish, provided she knows that her pupils are doing their best. As some one has aptly put it, "What the work does to the boy is vastly more significant than what the boy does to the work," for the object of handwork is not a finished product approximating perfection, but rather the expression of the truth that has been impressed, and a development of the constructive instinct. Is it too much to expect that the child who creates something worth while will be more likely to consecrate himself to a constructive life-work in the years to come? We can never tell how far-reaching may be the forces which we introduce into a young life at this plastic stage of its development.

XXXII

PLANNING FOR EASTER

BEGIN preparations early if you wish Easter to find your boys and girls ready to receive its glad message with open and receptive hearts. My experience is that the season will make its impress on them largely in proportion to the thoughtful, intelligent way it is approached, and to the number of interesting activities we can find for them to do. For instance, what Junior will not find his interest quickened and his thought stirred if he is asked two or three weeks in advance, to bring to the Easter service something from nature that seems to him to express the spirit of Easter, or that illustrates the miracle of awakening life?

The primitive instinct for collecting, of which we have recently spoken, will inspire him to choose many and varied symbols of Easter, such as pussy-willows, budding branches, wild flowers, cocoons, grubs, or other less obvious examples. But each and all will breathe the spirit of Spring and will fill the room with the beauty of new life and growth. To this collection you may add potted plants and flowers. If it is possible for you to go to the woods and find some early wild flowers and ferns, by all means do so. By taking plenty of soil with the roots they can be potted and will

repay your trouble by blossoming in the warmth of the house much sooner than if left in the cool woods. The hepatica I have found especially suitable for transplanting, as it is quite hardy. Similarly, the growth of little green shoots may be hastened by cutting budding branches and keeping them in water indoors for a few weeks. Crêpe paper butterflies cut out and pinned here and there around the room will add a pretty touch to the whole. In one class a cocoon, which had been kept in a warm sunny window, burst its dry shell on Easter Sunday, and a gorgeous butterfly emerged during the service, demonstrating before the Juniors' very eyes the age-old miracle of resurrection in nature.

A very definite task to be assigned the Juniors well in advance is the Easter Memory work, which should include various suitable references and more especially the story of the first Easter morn, as told in Mark 16: 1–7. If this passage is repeated by the whole class for several Sundays, the average Junior will readily master it, for, as we have pointed out, he is in the period of Golden Memory when the mind is most retentive and responds wonderfully to the drill method.

A profitable form of Bible drill which is always popular with Juniors, consists in locating passages of Scripture, which gives them just the practice they need in learning to handle the book intelligently and find references readily. Each scholar must of course have his own Bible in the class, which is an added advantage, and will set to work

eagerly when the teacher says: "Who can find an account of the crucifixion?" "Where do we look for the story of the resurrection?" "Find Mark's account of the First Easter Morning," and so on, the one first locating the passage standing with his Bible open at the place. Or the teacher may give out slips of paper with a reference for each scholar to find and read.

The material thus learned should be used on Easter Sunday, arranged in the form of a short responsive service, in which all may take part. The songs for the occasion should be carefully selected, with due regard to the thought impression they make as well as the suitability of the music. "The Lord is Risen To-day" and "Jesus Christ is Risen To-day" from "Junior Hymns and Carols" are splendid, and "Easter Carol" and "Easter Song" from "Songs for Little People" are two that I have used successfully. The best Easter collection is "Six Easter Carols" edited by Harker and published by Schirmer.

Another thing which should be planned well ahead of time is the handwork, without which much of the joy of Easter is lost for the Juniors. One of the simplest forms of handwork is the making of Easter bookmarks, which may be linked up with an unselfish thought of others if they are intended to be sent as little gifts to those who are sick or lonely or shut-in. The teacher may supply each pupil with a piece of white cardboard cut to size, and an assortment of the various decorative gummed seals or figures cut from fancy crêpe pa-

per, which are designed especially for Easter. Or she may simply outline the plan, showing samples of the bookmarks and leave the rest to the Juniors' ingenuity and collective instinct. This can safely be depended upon to provide a great variety of pictures and other decorative material, which, together with crayons or paints and a fund of originality, will produce amazing results. A Bible verse or part of an Easter hymn should be written or printed neatly on the card.

Older Juniors or those who are accustomed to handwork, will delight in illustrating an Easter hymn, with clipped pictures, flower borders and conventional designs of their own, and will usually turn out beautiful work, in fact, quite artistic, in many cases. The songs in the foregoing list have been used most satisfactorily for this purpose, as each one lends itself to pictorial treatment. All the Juniors need is a general idea of what is desired and they will attack the work eagerly. A good plan is to have the mid-week meeting of the class devoted to getting the handwork started, and to encouraging and helping any backward ones. A little exhibition of the handwork, to which the parents are invited, should be arranged for Easter Sunday, which will prove all the needed incentive.

In all our plans for Easter, let us see to it that the true spirit of the season pervades our service so deeply that our boys and girls will carry away a lasting impression, not only of happiness and beauty, but of faith in the immortality of the soul which the reawakening of nature teaches.

XXXIII

WHAT JUNIORS CAN DO FOR CHRISTMAS

IF Christmas means only a season of feasting and merry-making and receiving gifts to your Juniors, they have missed not only the true significance of the day, but the greatest joy it holds for mortals of all ages. Not until they have sacrificed something of their own, in the way of time, energy or money, can they fully realize the blessedness of Christmas, which is a lasting reminder to us of the greatest Gift of all the ages. Even though they may have little or no capital to spend, Junior boys and girls have enough inventive genius and handicraft skill to evolve a great variety of gifts that will be both useful and artistic, and what is most important, will carry to some less favoured than themselves, the spirit of Christmas cheer and the thrill of being remembered.

Why not start your Juniors on a Holiday Box to be sent, or better still, take, to a hospital or mission church? The articles it contains will be none the less appreciated because of their simplicity and inexpensiveness, and the delight the Juniors will experience in making them will be a revelation to you if you have never seen them at work with their hands. The materials that will

be required may be found in any home, or purchased for a few cents—old magazines, library paste or glue in a tube, cardboard, Christmas cards and stickers and the like form the basis of operations. The box itself may be an ordinary grocery box, preferably with a hinged cover. It may be made quite attractive by the application of holly paper, or red and white brick paper obtainable by the roll, or fancy wall-paper might be used, though it would be less "Christmasy" in appearance.

Let the contents of this Holiday Box be entirely things that will give the boys and girls who receive them a good time, for that is what many of them need most, especially those who have to spend long, weary hours in the hospital. But apart from the pleasure of seeing what is inside, half the fun will be in unwrapping the cute little packages, so the Juniors will need to use all their ingenuity in making them as attractive and unusual looking as possible. Many colours of tissue paper may be used, fancy Christmas crêpe paper, silver or gold tin-foil, and for tying, red and green string, raffia, gold cord, or just stickers. A cheery greeting or message written on a pretty card or a piece of children's note-paper, should be attached to each gift, stating whether it is for a boy or a girl.

Some of the things that the boys will be eager to make for the box are whistles, tops, model air-

ships made from construction paper with real parts and a propeller that will go round, and so on. With a little supervision they can readily construct simple jig-saw toys cut out of light wood and painted suitably, using pictures for patterns. Those who cannot use tools, can fashion very realistic soldiers from clothes-pins, using coloured paper for their clothes and fastening these on with glue. Quaint little Santa Claus figures that perch on the tips of the branches of the Christmas tree are made in the same way, with red paper suits, pointed hats and white cotton wool beards. Similarly, Little Red Riding Hood and other celebrated characters may be contrived from lollipops to hang from the tree, by dressing them in paper and drawing faces on the tissue wrappings of the candy.

The girls might make little bags to hold jacks or personal belongings, out of odds and ends of bright materials, and dress tiny dolls, if possible in clothes that can be taken off and put on. A few inexpensive dolls wrapped in rolls containing pretty, thin material, odd bits of lace, ribbon and little artificial flowers, would be appreciated by many a small girlie who would find happy employment in outfitting Miss Dolly. The message to go with these wee babies might read:

"If you will look within these scraps,
You'll find a little friend, perhaps.
Of pretty clothes she hasn't any;
But from these scraps you'll make her many.

She'll bring good luck and joy to you;
Her name is Mary Christmas, too."

Paper dolls are always a delight to a young girl's heart, and can be made every bit as charming as those in the stores. The magazines will supply any number of pretty figures from the fashion pages and advertisements, which may be coloured with crayons and mounted on stiff paper or cardboard. Whole family groups may be made in this way. Something that would interest an older girl still more would be a box containing paper dolls mounted on light cardboard, all ready to be cut out, and a box of paints or crayons for tinting them.

Both boys and girls can spend many busy hours making scrap-books if the necessary tools are provided. Scrap-book sets include a cheap scribbler, a tube of photo paste and a few envelopes filled with cut-out pictures of different kinds. Several envelopes of jokes and little stories might also fill in the odd spaces of this Holiday Box. A bubble set is another fascinating thing for a boy or girl to own, and requires only a small enamel bowl, two clay pipes and a piece of soap. A "Mystery Ball" is about as much fun to make as it is to unravel. It is formed by rolling into a ball of coloured wool all sorts of toys and small favours which come to view one at a time as the ball is unwound. I once saw a "Cinderella Ball" of the same order which made the little girl who received

it hop up and down with glee. The yarn was pink, and from the top of the ball peeped the head of the fairy godmother wearing a cap and kerchief, just as if she were responsible for all the gifts which the ball contained—a doll's watch, slippers, gloves, necklace of blue beads, toy mirror, tiny comb and brush, and various other little things that would please a dolly Cinderella.

The Juniors will take more interest in the preparation of this box if they meet together at one of their homes, or the teacher's, at stated times, to make the gifts that are to go in it. Not only will they gain ideas from each other's work, but the enthusiasm which comes from well-directed teamwork. If we never for a moment let them forget whose Birthday they are celebrating, their gift making and giving will bring not only happiness and satisfaction to their young hearts, but a deep, inner thankfulness for God's gift of His Son.

XXXIV

THE IMPORTANCE OF RIGHT CHOICES

WITHOUT presuming to criticize parental methods of training, the teacher of Juniors may form a pretty good opinion as to whether his scholars are being developed at home along lines of independent thought and action, or are growing up without minds of their own.

Too often we find boys or girls unable to pronounce a decision on the simplest matters, or if they do decide they cannot give any clear-cut reasons for their choice. Occasionally, however, we come upon one who is able to weigh carefully both sides of a question, form an opinion, and tell us why he would decide after that fashion. When this happens, we can safely conclude that this child has been shown the reasons why certain things should be done while certain others are left undone, and that his will has been *guided,* not *forced* into the right channels until he has learned to choose the right from within and not through enforced obedience and fear of punishment.

Have we not all seen boys brought up by God-fearing parents, in the strictest of homes, astonish society by their reckless devotion to dissipation as soon as they were old enough to break away from parental authority? In such cases the cause is not

hard to find. So long have they had everything decided for them by their elders that when their own will-power is called into action, it is so lamentably weak and undeveloped through long dependence that it cannot resist the temptations which assail it. Hence we can readily see that the only will-power that is of any avail in character forming is *within* the child, and that he can be counted on to choose right from wrong only after long practice in choosing right.

What, then, can the teacher do for boys or girls who show by unmistakable signs that their home training in will-power has been largely neglected, and that they are unaccustomed to deciding for themselves? It is undoubtedly his duty to make the most of the short time he is in touch with his pupils each week, and do his utmost to help them to overcome their handicap—and he can help more than he realizes, if he deliberately sets out to counteract this weakness. Let him emphasize on every possible occasion the fact that Juniors are constantly being called upon to make important choices which no one else can decide for them, and that if they would learn to choose wisely they must consider both sides of a question, weigh the advice of their elders, and know why they arrive at certain conclusions.

"If you had to choose between this course and that course, which would you decide upon and why?" is a question which, if frequently asked,

will start even the most indifferent child mind to thinking. Varying opinions may be offered and lively discussions ensue, but always let the pros and cons of the case be carefully weighed, and in every instance the reasons for the decision clearly stated.

There is scarcely ever a lesson which does not present some situation calling for a decision between two forces or courses of action, or into which this element may not be introduced. Let the teacher make use of this line of thought whenever possible, and introduce it persistently in his stories of great men, whose decisions can be admired and their example followed, or of failures in life due to inability to decide aright when a crisis came.

Experience has shown that work along this line may be made decidedly worth while to boys and girls whose training has lacked any definite development in will-power. When they come to their teacher for advice on important matters, concerning their own lives, as they assuredly will if the teacher has won their true affection, he can guide them along the right path, and yet leave the final decision with them. And when the time is ripe for the Great Decision to devote the life to Christ and His service, without which experience no child should pass beyond the Junior Department, the teacher will realize more than ever the importance of having developed an intelligent and controlled will-power, through the exercise of the power of choice.

XXXV

DEVELOPING REVERENCE

AS a rule the spirit of reverence is not an outstanding characteristic of Junior boys and girls. It seems easy for them to be noisy and boisterous in class, to whisper and look about them during prayer, to scribble in the hymn-books or Bibles, and to hatch mischievous plots at all times.

But, after all, when you look right into the matter, isn't their abounding vitality more responsible for this attitude than any feeling of disrespect? They are thoughtless, full of energy and restless by nature, and perhaps if we taxed their powers of restraint less by providing more expressional activities, we might not find so much seeming irreverence.

At the same time, there is a great deal which the teacher can do toward producing an atmosphere in which reverence will be spontaneous and natural and it seems to me that this matter should be given more thought and attention than it usually receives.

One authority makes this statement: "Perhaps the fundamental religious habit toward the formation of which the Junior Department should bend its energy is that of reverence. Religion depends

largely on reverence." And again: "He who, during his Junior years, has formed the habit of reverence for God, is rarely turned aside from this attitude."

It is not strange that these things are so, for the habits formed at this impressionable period of life are apt to be the most lasting. Another factor which adds to the teacher's responsibility is the susceptibility of the child to the power of example, especially of his elders and those whom he holds in high regard. Too often thoughtless adults, who doubtless failed to form this habit of reverence in youth, set such a bad example by talking during the service, sitting bolt upright and gazing around at prayer time, or making some neglected preparation when they should be in an attitude of worship, that it is small wonder our children seem inclined to irreverence. As long as we are guilty of such glaring faults, all our talk about the beauty and need of reverence is as a "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."

From the very outset of the service the leader's manner either inspires or discourages reverence. A carefully planned programme denotes efficiency and commands respect, while unpreparedness and indecision on the part of the teacher impart a restless, inattentive feeling that lacks due respect and reverence. Late comers are also a frequent cause of general disturbance. The first part of the service should be pervaded by a spirit of worship,

which the children will instinctively sense and respond to. The hymns sung should be chosen with due regard to their application to the truth of the lesson, and the thought of the words emphasized (and explained when necessary) so that there may be no "vain repetition" in place of understanding and aroused feelings.

When the time comes for the prayer, there should be a very real atmosphere of reverence and worship, and it is always a mistake to start before every heart is in harmony with the spirit of the hour, every boy or girl realizing that they are about to talk with God.

Under no consideration should any one be admitted to the room during the prayer, nor the officers of the department be allowed to continue their work, as I have seen done, but every teacher and helper, as well as every scholar, should close the eyes and bow the head in a prayerful attitude. When this is done, there is no trouble about securing reverence, for it follows as a logical sequence.

As it is of the utmost importance for the Juniors to feel that prayer is an outgoing of the heart and not merely a formal repetition of words, it should be simple and direct, free from abstract ideas and diction, and not too long. Expressions of thankfulness for the concrete things of life and petitions that come within the heart life and experience of Juniors, such as we shall consider in our next talk, will make prayer a real thing to them, whereas

confessions of sin and guilt totally foreign to their life and experience may make it a hollow mockery and ruin all feeling of reverence.

The greatest antidote for disrespectful handling of the Bible is, I believe, in developing such a love for the stories and heroes of the sacred page, that the child will not only learn to love it as he would a favourite book, but accord it the first place in all literature. Each Junior should own a Bible and bring it to school every Sunday for use in the class. Through a knowledge of it he will learn love and reverence for God the Creator and all-powerful Father, and for Jesus whose heroic deeds and wonderful personality inspire young and old alike to admiration and reverence.

XXXVI

THE PRAYER-LIFE OF JUNIORS

IT was a surprise and a revelation to me when I found one day that only two of my Juniors had ever offered a prayer of his own. Of course they all "said their prayers" regularly, repeating the familiar "Now I lay me down to sleep," or "Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me," but that was as far as their knowledge of prayer went. When I asked them if these words expressed what they wanted to say to their Heavenly Father, a number agreed that they often wished to take their troubles and problems to Him but did not know how to express themselves. A few thought that He would not care about these little things, until I directed their attention to the comforting words of 1 Peter 5: 7, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you," and all admitted that it would be a great help to them in their every-day life to be able to talk to their Heavenly Father about the things that interested them, and the problems that perplexed their young minds.

They realized at once how meaningless most of their prayers had been when I asked them how their own fathers would like it if they spoke to them only once a day at a stated time, and then only in the same little verse of four lines, which they had learned by heart when they were babies. Following up this point of contact, it was not hard

to make each child see that prayer was not something separate and apart from his daily life, but a very vital part of it; not the repetition of a few lines, but the outpouring of the very heart and soul to a Heavenly Father who loves and sympathizes and helps.

They liked the story of the Junior boy who attributed his great skill in a baseball game to prayer. "I never made a move without asking God to help me," he said, and when questioned further added, "I never do anything without asking God to help me, and why not ask Him to help me win a game?" A boy or girl who early forms such a habit of dependence upon God will never outgrow it.

It was not quite so easy to convince the Juniors that the simplest, most natural form of expression would be well pleasing to God, for they seemed rather timid at the thought of voicing their thoughts to Him. It is difficult for a child, at this stage of his development, to put into words the inner longings and feelings of his soul, and so in order to facilitate this expression, I made use in the class of an excellent little book by Rev. J. E. Ward, "A Child's Book of Prayer," which contains seventeen beautiful little prayers on the various themes which comprise a Junior boy's or girl's life. They are so simple and straightforward that they are quickly learned and very readily assimilated by the children as their own natural expression, though they are not intended to supersede this, of course.

For instance, A Prayer in Play: "Heavenly Father, who didst always watch over Thy boy Jesus as He played with the children in Nazareth, let Thine angels watch over us in our play; make and keep us pure and true; help us to be kind when we win, and patient when we lose; let us never forget ourselves, but always have courage to play the game fearlessly and fairly, knowing it is always in the sight of our Lord Jesus. Amen."

Then there is a Prayer for Mother, one for Father, one for God's Creatures, for the Children of Other Lands, and this one, For Gladness Always, which makes its own appeal: "Loving Father in Heaven, who was pleased to hear the children crying in the temple, and saying, 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' give us always joyful hearts and glad looks, that we may in our lives join the angels in Heaven, in their praises of Thee, day and night, for the sake of our loving Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen."

Another one equally appropriate is called a Prayer for Understanding the Holy Book. "Lord Jesus, who has told us in Thy Holy Bible that Thou lovest us, and gave Thy life for us, keep us in that love, and help us more and more to read, love and understand Thy Word, that we may learn of Thee and of the Holy Spirit of Thy Father in Heaven. Amen."

Even a Junior has his days of failure and discouragement, when he is selfish, disobedient or unkind, and when he feels the need of telling his Heavenly Father about his mistakes and asking

for His forgiveness. This Prayer for Pardon helps him to crystallize his thoughts. "Heavenly Father, we know that Thou seest all our secret thoughts, and that when we fail we hurt Thee in Thy love. Forgive us, O Father, in all that we have done or said or thought amiss, that we may be more fit to be Thy children, for ever and ever. Amen."

The Prayer for a Pure Heart is equally helpful in its practical sentiment. "Our Father, who has taught us that our bodies were made for the home of Thy Holy Spirit, and were given us as a sacred trust to keep for Thee, take from us all idleness and carelessness; make us ever pure in heart; and help us to be always so clean and neat that Thy Holy Spirit may never want to leave His home but may always abide with us, to guide and keep us for Jesus' sake. Amen."

A prayer of dedication that expressed the Junior's feelings in some such way as the following might be composed by the teacher for use in the class: "O God, now while I am young, I give Thee my heart. Take it, I pray Thee, into Thine own care and keeping, that through my whole life I may belong to Thee, and serve Thee with all my powers of body, mind and soul. I ask it for Christ's sake. Amen."

And so by helping their stammering tongues to express themselves in the language of prayer, the teacher of Juniors may be able to establish, at this habit-forming period, a real prayer life that will be a vital force in the child's experience.

XXXVII

WINNING THEM TO DECISION

WHILE we are told that by far the greatest number of decisions occur during the period of adolescence, there is every reason to believe that such an experience is quite natural during the Junior years. In fact, it is easier now than it will ever be again, for though there is a great spiritual awakening a little later in life, there are many more things to oppose the decision for Christ than there are during this period of later childhood. The Junior may not have any deep understanding of the spiritual things of life, but if he loves God and wants to use his energies for Him, he may be a sincere child Christian and should be encouraged to make this decision. Jesus urged the children to come to Him, and we are making a great mistake if we try to keep them away until they can comprehend the depths of religion and the things of God.

Of course we must not look for an adult experience or expect an ordinary conversion, which means a great change from the ways of the past. The Junior boy or girl will have little or no sense of guilt or sorrow for past sins, no great struggle, but merely a desire to live on as a child of God, and to decide to serve Him with all their powers

as long as they live. As one writer puts it: "It is not the turning away from a life of sin, which is impossible for the average boy and girl, but rather *the definite decision never to enter into a life that does not belong to God, which we seek.*" Such a decision, once made, should form the basis of a true Christian life which will develop and broaden out into a deep and satisfying religious experience, enriched by the faith which comes with later years.

Doubtless every teacher devoutly wants such an experience to come to his pupils, but wishing is not enough. If he would bring them into right relationship with God, he must see to it that he is there himself, that his whole heart is in the work, and that he prays earnestly for the souls that are entrusted to his care. If he has made up his mind that no boy or girl shall pass out of the Junior Department without being a confessed follower of Jesus Christ, he will prepare every lesson of the year with that thought in view, and will present Jesus as a Hero whose manhood and achievements cannot but appeal to the hero-worshiping Juniors, and will inspire them to be His followers. More than this, the teacher must let his own religion shine forth in his every-day life, for as one puts it, "the God whom the Junior decides to follow is not the Godhead of the Trinity, or even God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, so much as the God of the one who leads him to this decision."

Many a teacher has been discouraged by the startling discovery of a spirit of doubt in the minds of the pupils whom he supposed too young for such questionings. I have had boys and girls express doubts and inquiries which amazed but did not alarm me because of the ease with which they were settled and the young mind set at rest again. Up to this stage the child's religion has been very simple, accepting all that was told him, and loving God "because He first loved us." His youthful imagination renders the spirit world very real to him, but as his reason develops he thinks things out more and must know *how* everything is done.

During this period he is reconstructing his ideas of religion to meet the demands of his growing reason and his broadened experience, and it is not to be wondered at if he doubts some of his old theories and sees the need of readjustment. The wise teacher will prepare for this important time and tactfully explain away the difficulties as they arise, so that no trace of doubt or misgiving will remain to do harm.

But a teacher may do his very utmost to bring his scholars to decision without seeing his ambition realized, if he does not deliberately invite them definitely to acknowledge their purpose to serve God. The Juniors may be ready and eager to make this stand, but unless they are given a definite opportunity there is very little chance of their doing so. For this reason Decision Day is considered

worthy of a place on the Junior programme. For several weeks previous, each teacher should prepare his class for this day, and if possible have private conversation with the individual members. Then on Decision Day the Department Superintendent should give a simple, direct talk to the boys and girls, followed by cards for them to take home, or sign at once. These cards may read something like the following:

> "I love God, I want to belong to Him,
> I will try to obey Him and be the kind of
> a Christian He wants me to be."

If this is followed by an impressive dedication service, the Juniors will carry away a memory long to be cherished which will be a potent influence in their later lives.

Sometimes a certain shyness or reticence in speaking of the religious life is encountered, especially among boys. This very natural reserve should not discourage the leader, for the Junior does not wear his heart on his sleeve and as a rule permits only rare glimpses into his emotional and spiritual life. The seeming indifference is often only skin-deep, but we must not try to force an experience, nor pry open this shell of reserve. We can only do our part well and await the results prayerfully and hopefully.

The expressed decision should be only the beginning of a work of equally great importance, for

the impulse to serve God will die out if it is not developed and put to work. We should try to make the Junior's religion one of works, rather than of faith, for faith comes only through years of obedience and service. And in the words of one writer, "Every act of obedience or service is one of the foundation stones of faith and love."

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